

**The Purpose
and
Progress in Prophecy**

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The
Purpose and Progress
In Prophecy



By

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*To my former students in Old Testament
Exegesis, whose kindly appreciation has
made teaching a delightful experience, this
book is affectionately dedicated.*

PREFACE

This work is an outgrowth from class room instruction and is released in response to the request of students and other friends. It is offered as a contribution toward Biblical knowledge, which is the crying need of the church. In the pulpit and before the Bible class there is too much moralizing and not enough Bible teaching.

Any effort to understand the Bible is incomplete which does not involve a systematic study of its prophecies. Some suggest that such a study is not necessary but rather dangerous, because one may become a theorist. Others openly advise against it and contend that the prophecies are beyond man's power to comprehend, as is evidenced by the hopeless disagreement among those who have written or spoken on the subject. These views are not in accord with men who have spoken for God. Peter said, "we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well to take heed, as a lamp shining in a dark place" (II Peter 1:19). John wrote, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein" (Rev. 1:3).

The plan, as suggested by the title and observed from a study of the book, is to take the leading predictions and in them see the gradual unfolding of Jehovah's purpose for men in the coming of the Messiah. The arrangement of the material in outline form is intended as an aid to the preacher as well as to the reading public. By analysis and synthesis the author has tried not only to instruct in the prophetic word, but also to impress the mind with the divine origin of the Scriptures.

In the process of development, the one aim has been to let the Book lead. The writer has no theory to defend; he is a free man. At times he appears controversial, because unbelief and human opinions have obstructed the

PREFACE

word of God. For this no apology is offered. As a conquering force the divine word gives no quarters.

In preparing this book the writer is indebted to a number of authors whose names appear in connection with direct quotations. He also acknowledges obligation to his colleague, Professor H. E. Knott, for reading the manuscript with a view of correcting the English. It makes no pretension to literary excellence, though it may be relied on for faithfulness to the inspired word, to commonly accepted principles of interpretation, and to historic accuracy.

This volume is sent forth with the hope that it will strengthen faith in the believer and help produce faith in the unbeliever. If those who read these pages are thereby led to better understand the Bible, believe its message and live its life, the labor of production is fully rewarded.

The Author.

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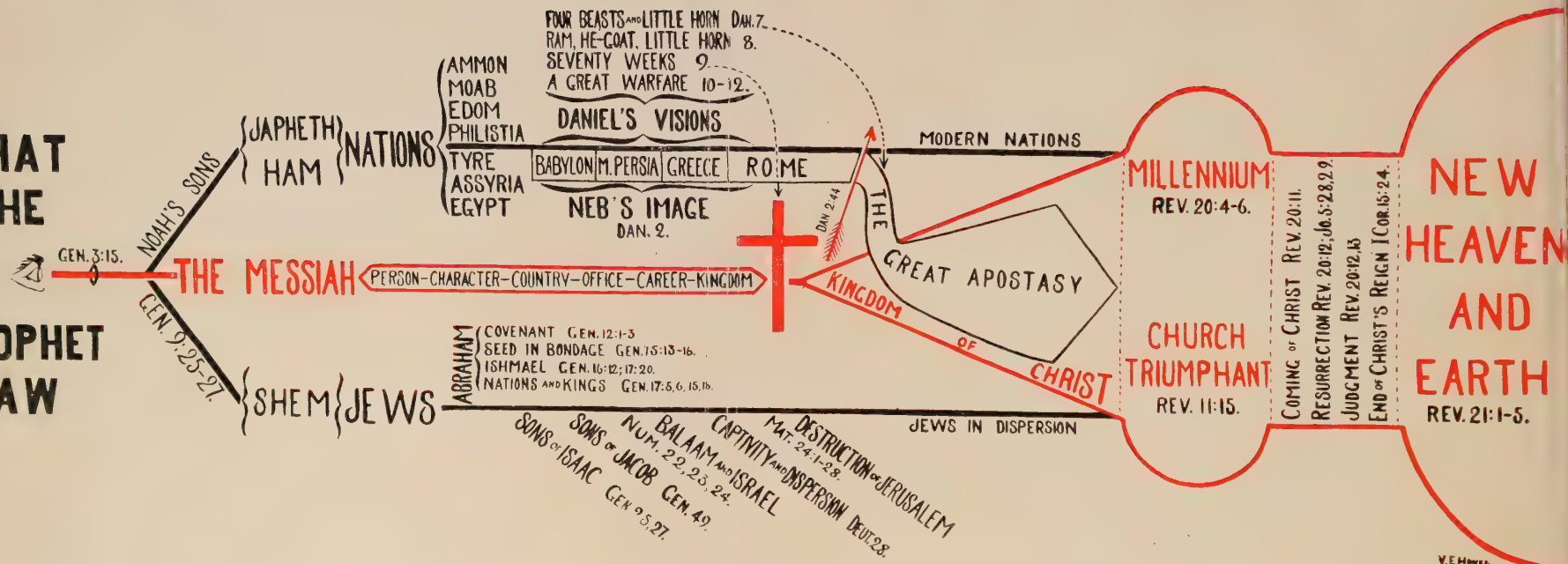
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WHAT THE
PROPHET
SAW



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. Value of This Study

1. Knowledge of the plan of God. Understanding the prophecies stands next in importance to knowing the gospel plan of salvation from sin, because in them God has revealed beforehand His purpose of the ages. Three outstanding lines develop that purpose—history, type and prophecy. Therefore, in order to a full understanding of the divine program, prophecy must be given special attention, as well as history and type. This knowledge makes intelligent Christians and able teachers of the Word. The ultimate purpose of all Bible knowledge is wisdom unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15).

2. A key to human history. At the beginning, Jehovah placed all human governments in relation to a single family, that of Seth, the earthly lineage of our Lord. These empires of antiquity became subjects of prophecy because of their relation to the chosen people, and in order to understand the history of both, the student must know the utterances of the prophets concerning them.

3. Predictive knowledge of the Messiah. Before He came, or His kingdom was set up, every detail concerning Him and His reign was foretold by the prophets. The interest and plan of the Bible center in this. It is the highest peak in all prophecy. To the King and His kingdom everything looks for consummation, hence, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). This fact Jesus used by which to summarize the Scriptures when He said, "these are they which bear witness of me" (Jno. 5:39). "He is the entire light of prophecy, and every prophecy must be understood in the light of the whole."

4. Evidence for unbelievers. Rationalistic thought,

which is ever feeding on changing science and speculative philosophy instead of upon the pure word of God, needs a cure for doubt. The study of prophecy and its fulfillment as seen in history, constitutes evidence for the divine origin of the Scriptures which never can be overthrown. "Produce your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and declare unto us what shall happen: declare ye the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or show us things to come" (Isa. 41:21, 22). Here is a challenge of the Eternal to the skeptic and the atheist. Will they dare to accept it? Feebly they have attempted to deny the divine revelation by a show of their wisdom. But the stupendous facts of history fulfilling prophecy are on record and testify against them. Because of their blindness, they see not the mighty hand of God in these things (Isa. 26:11). Nevertheless, when prediction and fulfillment are given careful attention, faith is the result (Jno. 14:29).

II. Meaning of the Word Prophet

1. Prophetes. From this Greek name comes the English word prophet, which means one who speaks for another. This meaning is illustrated by Aaron's personal relation to Moses. Jehovah said to Moses, "Aaron, thy brother, shall be thy prophet" (Ex. 7:1); "and he shall be thy spokesman unto the people" (Ex. 4:16). Because the prophet spoke for God to the people, he is designated as "a man of God" (1 Kings 13:1).

2. Navi. (Gen. 20:7). This Hebrew term comes from a word which means "to bubble forth," like a fountain. The meaning points to the fact that the prophet was inspired for his work by the Spirit of God (Neh. 9:30; 2 Pet. 1:21). Because he was inspired, he was spoken of as "a man of the Spirit," Ish haruah (Hos. 9:7).

3. Roeh. This means a "seer," one who sees the unseen

of the past, the present and the future. It was the oldest designation of a prophet (1 Sam. 9:9).

III. Office of the Prophet

As a function, prophecy existed from early times. Enoch was a prophet (Jude 14). Abraham is called a prophet (Gen. 20:7). Jacob predicted the future of his sons (Gen. 49). Moses was a great prophet (Num. 11:25; Deut. 18:18, 19). Some women possessed the prophetic gift, among whom were Miriam (Ex. 15:20) and Deborah (Judg. 4:4).

As an office, prophecy dates from Samuel. He was the last judge and the first official prophet. With him also began the school of the prophets (1 Sam. 10:5; 19:18-24). The occasion which gave rise to the prophet's office at that time was another office, that of the king.

1. To serve as an adjunct to the Kings of Israel and Judah. They were to rule Jehovah's people for Jehovah, hence were in need of the Spirit of Jehovah in order to be His representatives in government (1 Sam. 10:10, 11; 11:6). But when they became wicked, the Holy Spirit left them (1 Sam. 16:14). Because of this, the prophets were raised up to instruct, reform and admonish king and people. This office, therefore, became a necessary addition to the king's office, so that when he went wrong, the prophet would assume control of affairs in the kingdom.

2. To teach and preach. They were to teach the law of Jehovah, and thus keep alive the moral and religious interests of the people, who were threatened on every side by moral corruption and the intrusion of idolatry. For this reason the prophet was addressed by Jehovah as "a watchman" who must sound the alarm when danger appeared (Ezek. 3:16-21). Samuel gave his prophetic instruction to the people and the King (1 Sam. 12, 15). Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and the rest of the prophets delivered stirring sermons and addresses

to public assemblies (Isa. 1; Jer. 2; Ezek. 33; Hos. 4).

3. To reveal the past and the present. The prophets were able to know things of the past. Samuel told Saul that his father's asses had been found (1 Sam. 9:20). Elijah told Gehazi where he had been (2 Kings 5:26). Elisha told the king of Israel words spoken by the King of Syria in his bed-chamber (2 Kings 6:8-12). Daniel related Nebuchadnezzar's dream and gave the meaning thereof (Dan. 2:25-45).

They were also able to see concealed things of the present. When the great host of Syrians compassed Israel, Elisha saw Jehovah's defenders of His people, the mountain being "full of horses and chariots of fire" (2 Kings 6:14-17). Ahijah, though blind, knew Jereboam's wife when she came to him and prophesied to her (1 Kings 14:1-16).

4. To predict the future. The wide range of subject-matter of predictive prophecy may be summarized under three heads. First, there are the predictions concerning the chosen people, beginning with Seth, including Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the Hebrew nation. Second, there are the prophecies concerning the heathen nations. They became subjects of prophecy because of their attitude toward and dealings with the Hebrew people. Finally, there are the Messianic prophecies. These form the central line of all predictive prophecy, because the divine purpose is the salvation of the race through the Messiah. "To Him bear all the prophets witness" (Acts 10:43). The historical and poetical books also of the Old Testament are full of the Messianic ideal. A redeemed world is the goal toward which everything in the divine plan is moving.

The range of time during which predictions were made dates from the fall of man to the introduction of "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13). It does not seem that it was

in the divine purpose to set dates of fulfillment. A few instances, however, occur when the date is clearly indicated, but in general certain events and epochs, instead of exact dates, mark the accomplishment. The reasons for this may be that wicked men might set themselves to defeat the fulfillment, if the exact date were known. Also knowledge that judgment would come at a set time in the future might settle the people in a carnal security for the present.

IV. Ways of Communicating the Message to the Prophet

In the introduction to the Hebrew letter the writer says that the Old Testament prophets received revelation from God "in divers manners" (1:1). Some of these different ways God Himself names as "vision" and "dream" (Num. 12:6). The others are spoken of by the prophets themselves.

1. Dreams. Although dreams are generally superinduced by natural causes (Eccl. 5:3), it does not follow that in the past they were not produced by supernatural agency. In this way Joseph was given information concerning his future supremacy (Gen. 37:5-11). Pharaoh's dream, interpreted by Joseph, predicted seven years of plenty and seven years of famine (Gen. 41:1-36). By means of a dream Gideon's victory over the Midianites was foretold (Judg. 7:13-15). And to Nebuchadnezzar was revealed the future of his kingdom, according to the interpretation of his dream by Daniel the prophet (Dan. 2).

2. Visions. Isaiah had a vision of Jehovah. (Ch. 6). On this occasion he was informed concerning the future of the people and the land of Israel. Ezekiel saw the Temple (8:3). His body was in Chaldea, but in vision he was transported to Jerusalem and back again (11:24). Zechariah had a series of eight visions which were calculated to urge the people to build the Temple after

returning from Babylon (Chs. 1-6). Daniel in vision was transported from Babylon to the Mediterranean Sea, where he saw four beasts which represented four universal empires (ch. 7). Visions of this sort are not incredible. Man's spirit can act independent of the body, just as well as it can act through the body. Paul had no difficulty in believing this (2 Cor. 12:2-4). He did not doubt the actual fact, for he marks the exact time of the experience. What he did not know was whether the entire man was transported. His human consciousness was dormant during the rapture, but his spirit was active and received the revelation.

3. Oral communication. "Jehovah spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex. 33:11). In respect to familiarity and close friendship with Jehovah he was honored above all succeeding prophets (Deut. 34:10). Jehovah told Samuel of the judgment that would fall upon Eli and his sons on account of their sins (1 Sam. 3:10-14). When Elijah was hiding in a cave at Horeb from the wrath of Jezebel, Jehovah delivered to him a commission (1 Kings 19:9-18). While Daniel was praying and fasting for his people, the angel Gabriel appeared to him and gave him "wisdom and understanding" (Dan. 9:20-23).

4. Inspiration. In this case a miracle was performed upon the mind of the prophet by the Spirit of God and he spake as the Spirit gave him utterance (2 Chr. 15:1, 2; 2 Pet. 1:21). This was the more usual method by which messages came from Jehovah. For this reason we find so often the declaration, "the word of Jehovah came" to the prophet. ((See Isa. 38:4; Jer. 1:2; Ezek. 12:8, 17, 21, 26; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 3:1; Micah 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1). This expression clearly implies a revelation, an introduction of a new element into the human mind. To the people addressed, these words carried the conviction that the prophet spoke in the name and by the authority of Jehovah.

V. Tests of a True Prophet

In this world of the true and false in everything, there have always been prophets of satan and prophets of God. The ancients had their necromancers, diviners, wizards and those who had familiar spirits — all of whom claimed ability to obtain information concerning the hidden and the future. A standard was needed by which to distinguish the true messengers from the deceivers.

1. Loyalty to Jehovah. (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20). One purpose of the false prophets was to lead Israel "after other gods." But Jehovah had said, "Thou shalt not have any other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). There could be no deviation from that. Hence a pretender who came with a commission in the name of a false god, or spoke presumptuously in the name of Jehovah, must be put to death. Disloyalty to Jehovah was sufficient to disprove his claim. On the other hand, the presence of false prophets in Israel served as a test of the people, "whether ye love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

2. Fulfilled predictions. (Deut 18:21, 22). Since there were in Israel true and false prophets who spoke in the name of Jehovah, how were the people to know which one spoke for Jehovah? The importance of this question is manifest, for upon it depended the life of the nation. By the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the prediction, the people could determine which prophet was right. The announcement of things to come and the exact fulfillment of some would be a most convincing demonstration of the prophet's divine commission. A striking application of this test is reported in the 28th chapter of Jeremiah. Jeremiah had predicted that the captives of Judah and the treasures of Jehovah's house just previously carried away by Nebuchadnezzar would not return. He also prophesied that Nebuchadnezzar would

come back and take away the rest of the people and the remaining vessels of Jehovah's house. In opposition to this the prophet Hananiah declared as the word of Jehovah that within two years the vessels taken and the people carried captive would return. Which one should the people believe? They were assured by another prediction of Jeremiah. As a judgment on Hananiah for uttering a lie, he said, "this year thou shalt die." Within two months it was fulfilled, for his prophecy was spoken in the fifth month (v. 1) and Hananiah died in the seventh (v. 17).

3. Miraculous demonstration. When the prophet came to the people with a message, how were they to know that he spoke for Jehovah? By what means must that assurance be given? It is reasonable to expect a supernatural message to be confirmed by supernatural evidence. In other words, the one who claims to speak for Jehovah must furnish divine credentials. This enabled the people to believe the testimony. In this way Jehovah has always accredited His messengers who have brought a revelation. Thus Moses was accredited to Israel (Ex. 4:1-9). In like manner Jehovah supported Samuel (1 Sam. 3:19, 20). All Israel knew that he was a prophet of Jehovah. How did they know it? Jehovah supported Samuel not only by fulfilling his word, but also by miraculous demonstration (1 Sam. 12:16-18). By a sign Elijah was accredited on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:24, 38, 39). To prove his word to Hezekiah, Isaiah had the shadow on the King's dial moved back ten degrees (2 Kings 20; Isa. 38).

CHAPTER II

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

Gen. 3:15

This promise and prophecy is the starting point in the Plan of the Ages. It forms the baseline of all prophecy which is but the detailed utterances of this germ of truth. The seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman are the combatants in this mighty conflict. The struggle between good and evil is carried on through human channels on both sides, and is of absorbing interest on account of its momentous final outcome.

This text also contains an announcement of mercy. There have been but two sins committed, the report of which has reached the ears of men. The first was that by the angels who rebelled against the government of God; the second, that by Adam and Eve. "God spared not angels when they sinned," but put them at once under punishment in Tartarus until the judgment day (2 Pet. 2:4). They were capable of but one life and they lost forever. But Adam and Eve, being so constituted that they could live not only in a physical world but in a spiritual also, were placed under government with a view of curing their sin. To that end "the free gift came unto all men to justification of life" (Rom. 5:18). The announcement to Adam and Eve looks forward to this reprieve unto life through the mediation of Christ, and consequently suggests that man is not totally depraved. Total depravity can be predicated only of satan and his angels.

An analysis of this prophecy yields the following:

I. Conflict—"enmity between thee and the woman." The warfare began at once between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Cain and his descendants constituted the ungodly. Seth and his posterity became the godly ancestors of the promised Messiah. Satan's purpose was to defeat the plan of Jehovah with

reference to man's salvation. Before Christ came this conflict reached three climaxes. The first came at the time of the flood, the second in the period of the Judges, and the third in the apostasy of the chosen people before they were carried captive to Babylon. In each of these periods the serpent would have been victorious but for providential intervention. The next and greatest demonstration in this warfare was enacted during the life of Christ on earth when he met satan and all his hosts on a fair field. Demons were divinely permitted to possess men. Satan was allowed to meet the Son of God in the wilderness of Judea. Jewish and Roman rulers, instigated by the serpent, united against the seed of woman for the purpose of accomplishing his overthrow. But in every instance the superiority of the Messiah was manifested and He was forever demonstrated to be the Christ of God. The conflict is now carried on between the disciples of Christ and the ungodly world (John 15:18, 19), and will continue till the end of time.

II. Suffering—"thou shalt bruise his heel." Since suffering is one of the results of carnal warfare, we may expect it in this spiritual conflict. From the time this relentless war was declared, down to this present hour, the path of human history has been marked with sufferings which have come on account of the serpent's sting. As soon as Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, Abel the righteous was murdered. Through intermarriage of the godly and the ungodly, righteousness was almost extinguished in the earth and the flood came. Abraham became a wanderer over the face of the earth on account of idolatry in his home land (Josh. 24:2, 3). Righteous Lot was "sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked" (2 Pet. 2:7) which brought destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. In Egypt the chosen people were made "to serve with rigor" and their lives were made "bitter with hard service" (Ex. 1:13, 14). Job lost all of his property, ser-

vants, children, and he was smitten "with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (Job 1, 2). Space forbids further details, but let the reader turn to Heb. 11:32-38 and note the eloquent summary of suffering by the ancient heroes of the faith. Christian history also contains a large chapter of suffering on account of conflict between truth and error. "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).

This part of the prophecy refers in a special sense to suffering that should be inflicted on the humanity of Christ. During his public ministry it took the form of opposition by Jewish and Roman rulers through whom satan accomplished his work by open violence, secret machination, and subtle plotting. On account of this Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye are of your father, the devil" (Jno. 8:44). "Satan entered into Judas" for the purpose of betraying and delivering Jesus to the chief priests (Lk. 22:3-6), and he also instigated the crucifixion of "the Lord of glory" through "the rulers of this world" (1 Cor. 2:8).

III. Victory—"He shall bruise thy head." A wound on the head, the vital spot where is also the serpent's poison, is fatal. This stroke Jesus inflicted during His life, and by His death and resurrection. Then satan's power over men through demons was broken, atonement for sin was made, and the grave was robbed of its victim and terror (1 Jno. 3:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14, 15).

Though Jesus conquered satan, sin and death, and thus bruised the serpent's head from which he never can recover, still he is permitted to exercise himself over men to a limited degree. But his assaults are divinely used as a means of testing and refining the character of God's people (Isa. 48:10; Jas. 1:2, 3, 12), thus fitting them for eternal life with Him. On account of this they are said to arrive in the eternal world "out of the

great tribulation" (Rev. 7:14). On the other hand the church, like her Lord, shall bruise satan under her feet (Rom. 16:20). The divine plan, therefore, is that the final victory of the seed of the woman over the serpent shall be won through the church by means of the Gospel, which is "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17).

Conclusion

In this one verse is a prophecy, the fulfillment of which has been continuous from the time it was uttered till the present moment, and it will continue to influence human history to the end of time. In its unfolding we have looked at the battlefield of the human heart where the spiritual forces are daily contending for supremacy. The problem of suffering has been introduced as a part of the divine program for the purpose of determining who shall be worthy of the crown of life. The victory over satan and his hosts is assured from the start, an announcement which generates the needed fighting morale and becomes a mighty appeal for enlistment on the winning side.

This singular verse is a remarkable demonstration of the divine origin of the Scriptures. We have observed that it comprises all Hebrew and Christian history. In fact, it sums up the whole history of the world. For what has that been, what is it now, what will it be to the end of time, but a record of a mighty struggle between good and evil, truth and falsehood? It must appear conclusive that only the Omniscient and Omnipotent Jehovah could utter a statement like that and control history with reference to its fulfillment.

CHAPTER III

NOAH'S SONS

Gen. 9:25-27

The occasion of this prophecy is given in 9:20-24. On the one hand, sensual indulgence to excess is recorded against Noah, one illustration among many that the Bible speaks of men's faults as well as of their good deeds. On the other hand, there is recorded the unfilial, disrespectful and shameful conduct of Ham against his father. From this incident the prediction takes its rise and is based upon the character of the three sons. Since they became the founders of all the nations of antiquity, this prophecy lays out the destiny of the whole human race from the time of the prediction to the end of human history.

I. Ham

He became father of the black race. His name means "burnt or black," and corresponds to the countries allotted to his posterity, for the inhabitants of those countries are black. Cush was given part of Arabia and Ethiopia; Mizraim, Egypt; Put, Lybia; and Canaan, the Promised Land (See Gen. 10:6-20).

1. Ham is to be punished in his descendants—"Cursed be Canaan." It is a fact that neither Ham nor his son Canaan lived long enough to experience the penalty. This magnifies the judgment on Ham and points to the enormity of his sin against his father. In all ages Jehovah has demanded parental honor and respect. (Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-3), and the penalty of disobedience is exceedingly fearful to contemplate. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (Prov. 30:17. cp. Ex. 21:15, 17; Deut. 21:18-21).

2. The curse on Ham is servitude—"a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." This has become

history and is first referred to in Gen. 14:4. Chedor-laomer, King of Elam, belonged to the Semitic race (Gen. 10:22) which at that time was in superiority over the Canaanites. The prophecy was further fulfilled when Joshua and Israel, descendants of Shem, conquered the nations in the land of Canaan and made the Gibeonites and others servants. (See Josh. 9:21; 23:4). The rest were subdued in the reign of Solomon (2 Chr. 8:7-9). Later the Greeks and Romans, descendants of Japheth, conquered Ham's posterity, seen especially in the dreadful destruction of the Tyrians by Alexander the Great and the Carthaginians by Scipio. At that time Hannibal, commander-in-chief of the sons of Ham, and compelled by the fate of this prophecy, cried out, "I acknowledge the fortunes of Carthage." The continent of Africa, peopled principally by the children of Ham, has for ages been dominated successively by Romans, the Saracens, the Turks, and is at present dominated by several nations. The wickedness, ignorance, and misery resulting from the slavery of its inhabitants can never be told.

3. This curse is not irrevocable. The divine plan of the ages contemplates a blessing through the Messiah upon "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3), and even "Ethiopia shall haste to stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps. 68:31). This she began to do in the person of the Ethiopian treasurer who, having come to Jerusalem to worship, returned to his own land a Christian (Acts 8:26-39). Obedience to the gospel makes all races equal socially, and "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

II. Shem

This son of Noah became father of the brown race. His name signifies renown. To him was given the richest portion of the world (Gen 10: 21-31). Elam was the

ancient name of Persia. Assyria was named from Asshur. Arpachad settled in Chaldea. Lud inhabited Lydia in Asia Minor. Aram became the progenitor of the Aramians, later called Syrians.

1. Jehovah will be "the God of Shem." The knowledge and worship of the true God shall be preserved by the descendants in a world of idolatry. Subsequent history proves that to be a fact. Abraham, a descendant of Shem (Gen. 11:10-26) was called out of Ur for that purpose at a time when the knowledge of Jehovah was threatened with extinction by idolatry (Josh. 24:2, 3). Josephus says of him that "he began to have higher notions of virtue than others had, and he determined to renew, and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish his notion, that there was but one God, the Creator of the universe" (Ant. I. 7, 1). In Abraham the name and religion of Jehovah were made secure for the future, for he became, in the providence of God, the father of the Hebrew nation.

2. Shem is selected as the progenitor of the seed of the woman. This prophecy connects directly with Gen. 3:15 in that it designates the race from which the Messiah should come. In as much as Jehovah will be "the God of Shem," the divine purpose will be carried forward through this branch of the human family. The proof is found in the genealogies of Jesus. Luke (3:23-38) traces our Lord's ancestors back to Adam through Shem without reference to either Japeth or Ham; while Matthew (1:1-16) names His ancestors from Abram, a descendant of Shem, down to Joseph who was not His fleshly but legal father. In this the greatness of Shem's renown is especially seen. From him came the Jewish nation, all the prophets, the New Testament apostles, and the Savior Himself.

III. Japheth

Providentially this man became the father of the white race. The meaning of his name is enlargement, and to him was given "the isles of the nations," or "coastlands" of Europe (Gen. 10:2-5). Gomer was the father of the Germans; Magog, of the Cythians and Tartars; Madai, of the Medes; Javan, of the Ionians or Greeks; Tubal of the Iberians; Meshech, of the Muscovites, called by the Greeks the Cappadocians; Tiras, of the Thracians. In this divine original the future of Japheth's posterity is disclosed in the following language:

1. "God enlarge Japeth." According to the meaning of his name, this son of Noah has been enlarged numerically above his brethren. The proof of this is found by comparing the relative population of Noah's three sons. This can be ascertained by adding the sons of each which gives the common denominator sixteen. Japheth, having seven sons, represents seven-sixteenths of the human race. Shem, five-sixteenths; Ham, four-sixteenths. From this it appears that one-fourth of the world's population has come from Ham, a little more than one-third from Shem, and nearly one-half from Japheth.

Japheth has also been enlarged territorially. His descendants occupy the most extensive lands on earth, having settled the whole of the North Temperate Zone around the globe. His possessions include Northern Asia, all of Europe, North America, and large portions in the southern hemisphere.

2. "Let him dwell in the tents of Shem." According to history this may be understood in a two-fold way. Materially, it was fulfilled when the sons of Japheth, as seen in the Scythians, Greeks, Romans, Tartars, Britons, and others, took the lands and houses from the sons of Shem. Spiritually, the most probable explanation, it was fulfilled when the Jews and Gentiles were united in

Christ, the first account of which is found in the book of Acts. The tenth chapter records the calling of the Gentiles, and chapters thirteen to twenty-one deal with Paul's tours among the Gentiles which resulted in myriads of Jews and Gentiles becoming one in Christ. This part of the prophecy will yet further be fulfilled when the Jews shall be converted to their Messiah. For then, according to Paul, they shall evangelize the Gentiles, the effect of which is figuratively presented as a resurrection—"life from the dead" (Rom. 11:15).

Conclusion

This remarkable prophecy yields the following deductions:

1. That Jehovah superintends the nations of the whole world. He "determined their appointed seasons and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). The first demonstration of this is found in the ethnographic and geographic record of Gen. 10:1-32. The nations thus founded by the sons of Noah were divinely located with special reference to the chosen people from the descendants of Shem in order to carry forward the purpose concerning the Seed of the woman (Deut. 32:8, 9).

2. That the religious destiny of the world is bound up in the descendants of Shem. They should preserve the knowledge of the true God until the Seed of the woman should come. After that, the Savior, a descendant of Shem and the originator of Christianity, would, as the ruler of the universe, lay his hand upon human history with reference to the final triumph of His gospel and church in the earth.

3. That the political control of the world is vested in the descendants of Japheth. Their father was promised enlargement, the nature of which history proves to be numerical and territorial. His descendants have numbered about one-half of the human race and have possessed the most extensive lands on earth. In them

has been vested the political control of the world where it will remain until the Millennium. Then the universal reign of Christ will constitute a new form of government. They have always manifested an extraordinary amount of energy and aggressiveness. Intellectually, they have won unrivaled distinction as witnessed by the metaphysics of the Hindoos, the philosophy of the Greeks, the law and military skill of the Romans, the science, invention, discovery and educational progress of Europe and America. Morally they have led the world from the time the Gentiles were first called by the gospel to the present hour. Their evangelistic zeal has resulted in the translation of the Bible into seven hundred and seventy languages and dialects, and the proclamation of it throughout the whole world.

CHAPTER IV

ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS

As already pointed out in our previous studies, the Divine objective in the Old Testament is the Seed of the woman, the incarnation of "God in Christ." The accomplishment of this involves divine and human cooperation. At this stage prophecy opens up a series of events in connection with Abraham and his seed of transcendent importance in relation to the divine purpose in Gen. 3:15.

I. The Covenant with Abraham. Gen. 12:1-3

This transaction with Abraham in the 75th year of his life is spoken of by Paul as a "promise" and "covenant" concerning Christ (Gal. 3:16, 17). Our Lord, in speaking of its fulfillment, designated it as his day (Jno. 8:56). From these utterances it appears that the covenant with Abraham contains a prophecy concerning salvation of the race to be brought about through the medium of Abraham and his descendants. This covenant and prophecy contains two lines of development, one based upon Abraham's flesh, the other upon his faith.

1. The personal and temporal.

(1) "I will make of thee a great nation." That this was fulfilled when the Hebrew nation was formed, no one will deny. How great that nation became in numbers, wealth, political power, and religious influence is disclosed in its history.

(2) "I will bless thee and make thy name great." Personally, Abraham was greatly blessed of Jehovah in material wealth (Gen. 13:2; 24:35). Jehovah also made his name great. Before his call he had no renown as conqueror, ruler, or lawgiver; but now Jehovah raised him to preeminence. The greatness of his name appears in that: (a) He was elected as the fountain-head of God's chosen nation. This was a signal honor in view of God's purpose through His people of keeping himself

before the nations about Israel and of raising up from among them the Savior of the world. (b) He is presented as the father of the faithful. On account of his unwavering faith in God's word he is used in the New Testament as an example of the kind of faith necessary in order to be saved through Christ (Rom. 4:11-25; Gal. 3:6, 7). The faith called for is that which does not doubt the word of God, no more no less. (c) He is called "the friend of God" (Jas. 2:23). God chose him (Neh. 9:7) and called him (Isa. 51:2). On account of devotion to God, he obeyed that call (Gen. 12:4; Heb. 11:8). God was his friend; he was the friend of God.

Because of his preeminence in these particulars, his name was changed (Gen. 17:5).

(3) "I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse." Jehovah entered into a league with Abraham—to bless his friends and punish his enemies. Because of him good or evil would come to the human race. Which it should be depended upon the relationship men would sustain towards Abraham and his descendants. On account of their hostile attitude toward Abraham's seed, the Egyptians, the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, and the Romans have fallen under the curse of God, but Abraham's seed remain.

2. The worldwide and spiritual.

(1) "Be thou a blessing." This may include the personal and temporal part of the covenant, for Abraham proved to be a blessing to his relatives (Gen. 13:8, 9), to his family (Gen. 18:19), to his neighbors (Gen. 21:22-32), and to Egypt through Joseph. His life was a benediction to all with whom he came into contact. But in a larger sense he became a blessing spiritually to the whole world, for from him through his descendants we have the Savior, the church, and the Bible. That

it has to do with the blessings of the gospel is so stated by Paul in Gal. 3:9.

(2) "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This part of the prediction looks forward to the Millennium for its full accomplishment. Then shall the whole earth enjoy the blessings of the gospel on account of the universal reign of Christ (Rev. 11:15; Ps. 22:27, 28; Isa. 11:1-9).

Conclusion

We may now conclude that Abraham was the cause of two kinds of blessings—temporal and spiritual. On account of him all temporal good came to his descendents after the flesh. They were blessed in basket and in store. Happiness, honor, glory, eternal life is the portion of his spiritual children (Rom. 2:7). Moreover, these temporal and spiritual promises to Abraham became the foundations for two social institutions—"the Old and the New Covenants." The one was mediated by Moses at Sinai; the other by Jesus Christ, beginning at Jerusalem. The first promised temporal blessings only; the second guarantees spiritual and eternal blessings. Abraham's flesh stands in relation to the first; his faith in relation to the second. Hagar typified the Old Covenant, bearing children unto bondage; Sarah represents the New, which is the mother of all free in Christ (Gal. 4:21-31).

II. Abraham's Seed in Bondage. Gen. 15:13-16

The occasion of this prophetic utterance was the confirmation of Abraham's faith in Jehovah's promise concerning the inheritance of Canaan. A heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtle-dove and a young pigeon were sacrificed and the victims divided, except the birds, each piece laid overagainst the other. According to ancient custom the covenanting parties were to pass between the sacrifices. All day long Abraham sat there, keeping away

the birds of prey, and not until darkness had fallen did Jehovah appear as "a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch." He only passed between the divided sacrifice, because upon him alone rested the obligation of fulfilling the promise. ,

1. The place of servitude—"a land that is not theirs." Their bondage would be in some other land than Canaan, for that was theirs by gift from Jehovah and there they should be free and at rest. The fulfillment of this took place about two hundred years later when Israel moved to Egypt (Gen. 45:16-46:27).

2. Length of servitude—"four hundred years." Moses says Israel dwelt in Egypt "four hundred and thirty years" (Ex. 12:40). This apparent discrepancy is explained by Paul who counts the four hundred and thirty years from the time the Covenant was made with Abraham, when Jehovah called him the second time, to the giving of the law at Sinai (Gal. 3:17. cp. Gen. 12:1-3). The facts in detail contained in the calculation appear as follows: From Abraham's entry into Canaan until Isaac was born was 25 years (Gen 12:4; 21:5). Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born (Gen. 25:26). Jacob was 130 years old when he migrated into Egypt (Gen 47:9). Since 25 plus 60 plus 130 equals 215, the years the children of Israel spent in Canaan, it follows that the remaining 215 years must have been spent in Egypt. This is corroborated by Josephus who says, "They left Egypt in the month Xanthicus, the fifteenth day of the lunar month; four hundred and thirty years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but two hundred and fifteen years only after Jacob removed into Egypt" (Jos. Ant. II. 15. 2). The period of Israel's actual bondage can be known only approximately. Josephus tells us that Joseph was seventeen years old when sold into Egypt (Ant. II. 3:3). He was a hundred and ten years old when he died (Gen. 50:26). The time of his

residence in Egypt was, therefore, ninety-three years during which time his brethren were not slaves. From his death to the giving of the law there remains a period of one hundred and twenty-two years, but how much of this was occupied by Israel's bondage cannot be definitely known.

3. Judgment on the enslavers—"that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge." This was remarkably fulfilled in the redemption of Israel from bondage. The fearful judgment came in the form of ten plagues, and there was "a great cry in Egypt" (see Ex. chs. 8-12). These wonders proved the impotence of all Egyptian deities and demonstrated Jehovah to be the only true God.

4. Deliverance of the enslaved—"afterward shall they come out with great substance." This promise specifies two facts concerning the deliverance of Abraham's seed. They should "come out" after expiration of the four hundred years and the judgment inflicted on the Egyptians, and they should come out "with great substance." The first part of the promise became a great hope and consolation to Israel in going down into Egypt and enduring finally the bitter bondage (cp. Gen. 48:21; 50:24, 25). For fulfillment of the second part see Ex. 12:35, 36. This substance was due the Israelites for service rendered. Joseph got neither cities, territory, nor anything else for his service in Egypt. The children of Israel had been in terrible slavery for man years, and this was only a partial payment of what was due them.

5. Time of deliverance—"in the fourth generation." This means that in the fourth generation after Jacob, who went down into Egypt, should his posterity go out from thence. This, too, was accurately fulfilled (Ex. 6:16-20). Levi, the son of Jacob, was the father of Kohath, who was the father of Amram, who was the father of Moses, who was the fourth generation from Jacob.

The reason they cannot possess the land till in the fourth generation is that "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full." This nation was the most powerful in the land and is here put for all the Canaanites who were exceedingly corrupt (Lev. 18:1-30). Jehovah permitted them to go the full of their lusts, and when they had reached a certain point in wickedness, he called time on them. This shows that their destruction by the Israelites was not arbitrary but an act of justice, not only with reference to punishment for sin, but also because their usefulness in the world had ceased.

Conclusion

This prediction concerning Abraham's seed maps out their future history for four hundred and thirty years, and it was uttered two hundred and fifteen years before it came to pass. Five outstanding events are mentioned whose accurate fulfillment history proves. From this but one conclusion can be drawn; namely, that the book in which the record is found came from God.

The relation of this prophecy to the plan of God is clearly seen. Life of the chosen people was preserved during a period of famine by their migration into Egypt (Gen. 45:5). There they multiplied and became a great nation (Gen. 46:3. cp. Ex. 1:7; 12:37, 38). By this move they were separated from the corrupting influence of the Canaanites. Finally, their return to the land of promise when the time of the prophecy had expired shows that God's plan moves forward exactly on time according to previous arrangement, and no human program can defeat the divine purpose.

III. Ishmael. Gen. 16; 17:20; 21:17-21.

Ten years had gone by since Jehovah promised Abraham posterity, but as yet the mother had not been designated. Sarah, on account of her advancing age, could not become mother, still she believed the promise (Heb.

11:11). Out of anxiety she made an attempt at helping God in the matter by suggesting to her husband an alliance between him and her Egyptian slave, Hagar. Since female slaves were at that time the absolute property of the mistress, the children born of the slave were regarded as children of the mistress (Gen. 30:3). The prediction concerning Ishmael outlines facts in respect to his character and future history which have been fulfilled with astonishing precision.

1. His descendants. He is usually spoken of as the progenitor of the Arabs, which is true only in part. Southern Arabia and the country eastward were settled by Hamites (Gen. 10:7), but the principal inhabitants of Arabia were Shemites, descendants of Joktan, the son of Eber (Gen. 10:25-30). Moreover, the native Arab historians regard the Joktanites as the first progenitors of the Arabians, who were later joined by Ishmael and his descendants. Accordingly, the people are classified as (1) Pure Arabs, descendants of Joktan; (2) Mixed Arabs, descendants of Ishmael, because his mother was an Egyptian (Gen. 16:1), and he married an Egyptian woman (Gen. 21:21).

"Twelve princes" should he beget, and their names are given in Gen. 25:12-16. Like the Jews, the Arabians had twelve patriarchs and as many tribes, a form of government still kept intact among them. Concerning Ishmael's seed Jehovah said, "it shall not be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 16:10), "I will make of him a great nation" (Gen. 21:18). For Abraham's sake this promise was made (Gen. 21:13), and subsequent history proves its fulfillment. Newton on the Prophecies, p. 26, remarks that "in a few years his family was increased so, that in the 37th chapter of Genesis we read of Ishmaelites trading into Egypt. Afterwards his seed was multiplied exceedingly in the Hagarenes, who probably were denominated from his mother, Hagar; and in the Nabath-

aeans, who had their name from his son Nebaioth; and in the Arabs, especially the Scenites, and the Saracens, who overran a great part of the world; and his descendants, the Arabs, are a very numerous people at this day."

2. His character.

(1) Untamable. "And he shall be as a wild ass among men;" (literally, a wild ass man.). The description of a wild ass, given in Job 39:5-8, presents in detail the characteristics of Ishmael and his descendants.

"Who hath sent out the wild ass free?" The descendants of Ishmael retained their independence; and though they have at times been overcome in war, no political power has been able to keep them in subjection. Adam Clark says, "Many potentates among the Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks have endeavored to subjugate the wandering or wild Arabs; but, though they have had temporary triumphs, they have been unsuccessful. Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey, and Trajan, all endeavored to conquer Arabia, but in vain. From the beginning to the present they have maintained their independency."

"Whose home I have made in the wilderness." In Gen. 21:20 it is said of Ishmael that "he dwelt in the wilderness, and became, as he grew up, an archer." This is true also of his descendants, for they live where no other human being can live.

"He scorneth the tumult of the city." It is noteworthy that the Ishmaelites have always loved the desert and despised the restraint of towns and cities. They have no fixed habitation, but are rovers.

"The range of the mountains is his pasture." They pitch their tents and feed their flocks wherever it is most inviting. Many of them neither sow nor plant.

"He searcheth after every green thing." They are

continually looking for plunder and seize every kind of property they can find.

(2) Warlike. "His hand shall be against every man, and every man's had against him." Like Ishmael, his descendants have lived by violence and pillage. They regard all mankind as their enemies and travellers are forced to go through their country either protected by Turkish soldiers, or armed and in large caravans in order to defend themselves against these robbers and plunderers who are at war with the whole world. An Arab proverb reads: "In the desert everyone is everyone's enemy." They have no law but their spirit of adventure, look upon plunder as legitimate, and consider a daring robbery worthy of highest praise. No wonder, then, that "every man's hand is against him," and that the Bedouin is regarded as the outlaw among the nations of the world.

3. His dwelling place. "And he shall dwell over against (Hebr. before the faces of, or to the east of) all his brethren." The fulfillment of this is reported in Gen. 25:6, 16-18, where we are told that Abraham gave gifts to his sons of the concubines and sent them away "eastward, unto the east country." It states that the dwelling place of the twelve princes, sons of Ishmael, was "from Halivah unto Shur," that is, from the Persian Gulf to Egypt. There Ishmael lived and died "over against all his brethren," and there his descendants have lived to this day.

Conclusion

From the study of this prophecy certain facts appear which make a profound impression.

1. That Jehovah has a purpose in men. Since Ishmael and his descendants were made "a great nation" which has been providentially preserved, this people must be related in some way to the divine plan of the ages. What do divine revelation and human history disclose? (1) In

Gal. 4:21-31 Paul presents the allegory of Sarah and Hagar for the purpose of showing that the Law and the Gospel cannot be mixed. (2) The desolation of Ammon, Moab, and Edom is a matter of prophecy, the fulfillment of which was mostly accomplished by the Arabs. Other nations had a part in this, but the Bedouins completed the task. (3) The overthrow of the Eastern Roman Empire (Rev. 9:1-11) was also foretold and the Arabs were divinely prepared for this purpose 2538 years before it began to be fulfilled. Mohammed, a descendant of Ishmael, succeeded in gathering around his standard the nomadic tribes of central Arabia. They conquered Asia Minor, then invaded northern Africa, and finally overran a great part of southern Europe before they were stopped by Charles Martel at Tours in 732.

2. That when Jehovah maps out history before hand, no human power can defeat His plan. Other nations have been modified in many particulars as time has gone by, but not so the Ishmaelites. The only ground on which we can explain how the Arabs have been able to continue a distinct people all these centuries is that Jehovah originates nations and controls their destiny.

3. That we have here a visible demonstration of the inerrancy of the word of God. It must be admitted by every student of this prophecy that human sagacity could not foresee these things and have them come true. Before Ishmael was born he was divinely named. Then his character was sketched, the numerical strength of his posterity stated, and his dwelling place designated. "For ever, O Jehovah, Thy word is settled in heaven!" (Ps. 119:89).

IV. A Posterity of Renown. Gen. 17:4-6, 15, 16; 22:17

Abraham was at this time ninety-nine years old. Thirteen years of faith-testing had elapsed since Ishmael was born. Sarah was by nature barren, and still the covenant concerning posterity was unfulfilled. Isaac, being a child of promise, could not be born till nature

had spent itself and every human hope and prospect had vanished. Now the period had arrived when that which was impossible by nature should be accomplished by divine power, and faith receive its reward. In this circumstance Jehovah appeared to Abraham and said: "I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." In token of this prediction his name was changed from Abram (exalted Father) to Abraham (Father of a multitude), and his wife's name from Sarai, "my Princess," to Sarah, "Princess" (universal). In each case the same letter was added and for the same purpose. It should be observed that the prophecies in this section give matters in detail relative to the prediction in Gen. 12:1-3, and link with the prophecy in Gen. 3:15.

1. Numerous nations. "Thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations." Concerning his fleshly posterity, this has been fulfilled in the Ishmaelites, Midianites, and other nations by Hagar and Keturah; the Edomites and Israelites by Sarah. The fulfillment of this promise is further seen in Abraham's spiritual seed. He saw not only a number of political governments tracing their descent from him, but he also saw a great multitude of nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues who, like himself, have been justified by faith and obedience. In Rom. 4:13-17 Paul speaks of him as "heir of the world." And he argues that all believers in the Messiah are Abraham's children, whether Jews or Gentiles, and applies the argument by the prophecy: "A father of many nations have I made thee."

2. A distinguished people. "And kings shall come out of thee." We may look for great rulers, statesmen, lawgivers, and warriors among Abraham's descendants. These we find. The fulfillment of this prophecy is seen in the tribal head of the chosen people and in the kings of Israel and Judah. The divine purpose in this kingly line is made known by Matthew and Luke who present these royal personages as ancestors of the King of

Kings. (Matt 1:1-17; Lk. 3:23-38). Jehovah made a covenant with David concerning his throne (Ps. 89:3, 4). Matthew shows that Joseph and his ancestors were in the kingly line back to David. Since Jesus was born to Mary after her marriage to Joseph, He was Joseph's lawful heir and inherited the throne of David through him. Luke gives out Lord's ancestors on his mother's side and shows that he was "of the seed of David according to the flesh." Thus the two writers prove that Jesus had both a legal and natural right to David's throne. They also point out that the true King of men came from the seed of Abraham. The divine announcement concerning his rightful place among men reads: "All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. 72:11).

3. A victorious host. "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." The great victory of faith achieved by Abraham on this occasion carried with it a prediction of irresistible conquest by his descendants. Their invincible power is felt, first, by the nations of the world politically, as seen in the conquest of Canaan and subsequent wars. The divine assurance of victory is most impressively declared, so long as they remain true to God (Lev. 26:8; Deut. 28:7; Josh. 23:10). In the next place, this prediction certifies complete victory over the world spiritually, for Paul explains that these promises concerning Abraham's spiritual seed "which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). This places Christ, His church, and His gospel on winning ground. Final victory over every foe—political and spiritual—is made sure as if it had already been achieved. (Matt. 16:18; I John 5:4; Phil. 2:10, 11).

Conclusion

1. Service. This study presents the wonderful reach of service and influence wrought by two persons in relation to the divine purpose. Jehovah needed two services: First, an ancestor for the Messiah, and He must be a child of both Abraham and Sarah. Second, a human

illustration of acceptable faith, that kind which never doubts the divine word. These services this couple rendered without pressing any opinions of their own.

2. Fame. Abraham and Sarah are placed before us among the most honored on earth because of their co-operation with Jehovah. How unlikely that kings and nations should spring from a pasturing nomad. Yet it turned out that rulers and nations came through Isaac, Ishmael and the sons of Katurah. But that is not all. According to divine arrangement every nation on the face of the earth shall ultimately connect with Abraham and Sarah by that kind of faith which they possessed. The fame bestowed upon them is heightened by the change of their names, a practice then in vogue by princes in the East, who dignified their favorites by conferring upon them new titles.

3. Success. We have in this couple indubitable proof of victory by faith. For their achievements see Heb. 11:8-19. By faith they got a son from Jehovah adversely to natural law. By faith they received him back from the dead after having sacrificed him in their own determination. By faith they won everlasting renown as pilgrims in a world where people are wont to make permanent homes, "for they looked for the city which hath the foundations whose builder and make is God." Even in death they were victorious through faith, because it enabled them to look beyond the grave and to pass triumphantly through the valley of the shadow. From this it must be clear that the divine estimate of human success is a life of absolute trust in Jehovah plus accomplishments by divine power.

CHAPTER V
THE SONS OF ISAAC
Gen. 25:23; 27:27-29, 39, 40

Isaac and Rebekah had been married for twenty years without offspring. At last "Jehovah was entreated" of Isaac for his barren wife and twin sons were born. Their struggle before birth made the mother apprehensive "and she went to inquire of Jehovah" its meaning. The answer received made known to her that the last born, instead of the first born, is selected with reference to the birthright and the divine promise conveyed to Abraham. This was contrary to all expectation and oriental custom, but is explained by Paul in speaking of God's rejection of the Jews (Rom. 9:6-13). He points out that not only was Ishmael, Abraham's firstborn, rejected for the promised Isaac, but Esau was rejected and Jacob selected to "the purpose of God" in regard to the coming Redeemer. The choice was based upon character and ability, and chapters 25-36 in Genesis give history of the two boys to show that Jacob was better fitted for this position than was Esau. Jehovah's statement to Rebekah and Isaac's blessing upon Jacob and Esau contain their future history and destiny.

1. National renown. In this respect distinction should come to both of the sons, but with a difference. The Edomites were the descendants of Esau and Mount Seir was their divinely appointed dwelling place (Gen. 36:1, 8, 9, 43; Josh. 24:4). The territory was sandy and mountainous, situated south of the Dead Sea, yet by no means unfruitful in the glens and mountain terraces. Here the sons of Esau rose to the importance of sheiks, tribal governors, and their descendants grew into a mighty nation.

With Jacob was the first move in the divine plan towards forming the holy nation. Before him there had been only individuals, like Abraham and Isaac, but he became the father of twelve sons who grew into the

twelve tribes constituting the Hebrew people. For them, too, a place of residence was divinely selected and supernaturally enriched so that in the sacred dialect it is styled "the glory of all lands" (Ezek. 20:6). Here the seed of Jacob multiplied "as the stars of heaven" until they became "a great nation," thus fulfilling through him the divine promise to Abraham and Isaac.

Like their founders, these two nations have been very different in their manners, customs, and religion. Attention to this enables us to see why Jehovah selected Jacob instead of Esau. At birth the older on account of being red and hairy in appearance was named Esau. From the color of the pottage for which he sold his inheritance, he obtained the name Edom, or "red." The Scriptures present him as a man who in thoughts and desires lived entirely on the animal plane. They speak of him as a "profane person" (Heb. 12:16), because he placed more value on a dish of soup than on his birthright and the covenant promise. His strong animal nature caused him to roam the fields where he found his greatest delight in the excitements of the chase. The routine of his life is stated as follows: "He did eat and drink and rose up and went his way" (Gen. 25:34). Eat and drink, come and go! His one concern was to satisfy his appetite: he lived to eat. It seems that he was entirely destitute of religious thought and aim. The same sensual tendencies characterized his descendants. Geikie speaks of them thus: "The race of Edom which sprang from him—fickle, turbulent, false and unruly—embodies only too fully his worst characteristics. Their homes in the strong defiles of Seir, a fitting seat for attacking their neighbors, or for defense from their hatred, are themselves, when contrasted with Jacob's tents in the open country, striking commentaries on the respective tendencies of the brothers."

Jacob, on the other hand, is better fitted for Jehovah's purpose. His character is disclosed even in his name.

Jacob literally means a heel catcher, "one that takes by the heel" for the purpose of throwing down. From this probably came the other meaning to supplant (Gen. 27:36, cp. Hos. 12:3). Intellectually keen, he outwitted Esau at every turn, tricked his father in regard to the blessing, and was one too many for Laban in his dealings with him. These actions are not divinely endorsed, but they are reported for the purpose of showing Jacob to be mentally the more able of the two boys. Spiritually he was richly endowed. At no time in his life did his faith in Jehovah waver. For a supreme expression of that faith see Gen. 48:15, 16; Heb. 11:21. Above all else, his purpose and desire was to realize Jehovah's plan through him which no doubt was communicated by his mother. At the same time he seems to have been fearful lest the divine purpose should not be accomplished. On this account he snatched the birthright, and schemed with his mother to get the parental blessing, fearing that Jehovah could not manage the business and that he must make a special attempt to help Him.

2. Material prosperity. In the parental blessing temporal good was bestowed on both sons (Gen. 27:28, 39, 40) and history records the fulfillment. Jacob and his descendants inherited the land of promise where they lived in peace and plenty. (See Gen. 30:43; 31:9-12; Deut. 8:7-9; 33:28). Esau became a man of wealth, possessing "cattle, beasts, substance, fields, and vineyards" (Gen. 36:6, 7; Num. 20:17). His livelihood he should secure by the sword. This he did, for not only was he "a skillful hunter" (Gen. 25:27), but his children took by force Mt. Seir from the Horites (Deut. 2:12, 22). Besides, they were almost in constant warfare with the Jews (2 Chr. 28:16, 17), and when Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, they said to him, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps. 137:7).

3. Sovereign preeminence. This distinction was limited to Jacob. To him the Spirit said through the father,

“Let peoples serve thee, and nations bow down to thee.” Politically, this was fulfilled when the seven nations of Canaan were conquered by Joshua, and later in the extensive dominions of David and Solomon. It is also traceable in the compelled recognition of the Hebrew people by the nations about them on account of Jehovah’s blessing upon, and outstanding mighty acts through them. However, the fuller meaning of sovereign preeminence must include the spiritual relationship (cp. Isa. 60:1-6). From Jacob came the Messiah, and when the Gentiles became Christians, nations bowed down to Jacob.

Jacob’s preeminence is also asserted with relation to his brother: “The elder shall serve the younger;” “Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee.” Personally Esau did not serve Jacob, but his descendants did. David conquered the Edomites (2 Sam. 8:14). Under Jehoram they recovered their liberty (2 Kings 8:20) and then, nine hundred years after it had been delivered, was the prediction fulfilled that Esau should break loose from the yoke of servitude to Jacob (Gen. 27:40). Later they were conquered by Amaziah (2 King 14:7; 2 Chr. 25:11, 12), and his son Azariah took from them Elath, a commodious haven on the Red Sea (2 Kings 14:22). Under Ahaz they were again free and troubled Judah (2 Chr. 28:16, 17), and remained independent until they were defeated by Judas Maccabaeus who took their chief city, “Hebron, and the towns thereof, and pulled down the fortress of it, and burnt the towers thereof round about” (2 Mac. 10:17, 23; 1 Mac. 5:65). Finally John Hyrcanus subdued them and compelled them to embrace the Jewish religion (Jos. Ant. XIII. 9. 1) from which time they have been incorporated with the Jews.

4. Divine intervention. Jehovah’s curse or blessing would come upon people according to their attitude toward’s Jacob’s descendants (Gen. 27:29). The same

promise was made to Abraham (Gen. 12:3) and it lifts the divine promise, as does the seed of Jacob, into the realm of highest importance. Moreover, this pronouncement conveys the truth that the hand of Jehovah will control human history, so that every revolution in human affairs becomes a movement toward the consummation of human redemption.

Conclusion

Tracing the fulfillment of this prophecy we have found the most remarkable complications of life.

First, there is the outline of the divine plan made known by Jehovah to Rebekah concerning her sons yet to be born, and subsequently revealed by the Spirit in the blessings of Isaac. The two sons should become founders of nations, be prospered materially, and one of them attain political preeminence by virtue of being selected as the channel for the divine purpose. This plan maps out human history till the gospel age, or for more than nineteen hundred years. Who but the Author of life could do this and have it come true?

In the next place, on the human side there is scheming and duplicity on the part of the mother and son in order to obtain the father's benediction which Jehovah meant for Jacob to have but which he and his mother did not trust Jehovah to manage. The same cunning and ready wit is used by Jacob against the meanness of his uncle. Yet in all this plotting and planning the governing principle is faith in God and a desire to serve His purposes.

Finally, there is present in this wonderful story the overruling Providence. Again and again Jehovah intervenes and turns the carnal devices and unrighteous schemes to the accomplishment of His purpose, and at the same time purifies the life of Jacob by troubles and sorrow. He is driven from home to become a wanderer on the face of the earth. He is victimized by Laban, who tricks him into taking the wrong girl and changes his

wages no less than ten times. Fear and perplexity bear him down on his way back to Canaan as he draws near his brother, and at the river Jabbok he wins the distinction of "Israel, one who has striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Rachel, his most beloved wife, is removed by death while yet in the prime of life. Simeon and Levi cause him trouble by their outrageous cruelty upon the Shechemites (Gen. 34). Reuben, by another revolting crime (Gen. 35:22), adds distress to his father's heart. And at last Joseph, his favorite son, is sold a slave into Egypt. At the close of life, in reviewing the past he declared, "few and evil have been the days of the years of my life" (Gen. 47:9); but they had disciplined him into a grand old patriarch of a saintly character whose aged brow was adorned with the victor's crown.

CHAPTER VI

THE SONS OF JACOB

Gen. 49:1-27. cp. Deut. 33

This prophecy, like every other, must be studied in the light of its circumstances and delivery. According to a previous promise, Jacob should be the progenitor of a nation. In this prophetic delineation are the pleasing and painful events of his twelve sons who became the founders of that nation. To the chosen people had also been promised a land for inheritance. With light from above the patriarch saw the promised land in possession of his descendants. The time had come for further expansion of the divine program, and this was the object in the eye of the seer.

Jacob told his sons that which should come upon them "in the latter days," hence these utterances will concern especially their posterity. What he saw must be considered as grand characteristics of the tribes, rather than special events to be fulfilled at a set time. The good or ill coming to them seem to have been occasioned by the founders of the tribes, which proclaims the truth that blood tells and destiny is fixed by character.

1. Reuben 3, 4. As the first born, he could have had a double inheritance (Deut. 21:17); authority over the family after the death of his father, for his was "the preeminence of power"; and the priesthood, because in the patriarchal age that office belonged to the head of the family. All this he lost because of the following characteristics:

(1) An uncontrollable temper—"Boiling over as water." Not being able to control himself, he could not rule others.

(2) A weak moral character—"thou wentest up to thy father's bed" (cp. Gen. 35:22). Instead of defending

the honor of the family, he cast it down by his ungovernable passions.

The tribe never rose to preeminence in number, and from it came no judge, king, or prophet.

2. Simeon and Levi 5-7. They were brethren in disposition and associates in crime, hence named together. In the words, "O my soul, come not thou into their council," the dying patriarch disavowed all sympathy with their evil deeds.

(1) "They slew a man." They had committed homicide, and it is generally thought that it has reference to the murder of Hamor, the prince and father of Shechem (Gen. 34).

(2) "They hocked an ox." They violated the right of property when they plundered Shechem and hamstringed the cattle they did not take away.

The judgment for this reads: "I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel." This was literally fulfilled, for both tribes were "divided" and "scattered." At the division of Canaan, the Simeonites were given a few towns and villages in the portion allotted to Judah (Josh. 19:1). Later, when wanting more room, they formed separate colonies (1 Chr. 4:24-43. The Levites had no landed inheritance, but were settled in forty-eight cities among the several tribes. (Num. 35:1-8).

3. Judah 8-12.

(1) The significance of his name, Judah, means "Praise." This meaning is historic, for it was given him at birth by his mother (Gen. 29:35) and also prophetic—"thee shall thy brethren praise." The fulfillment is seen in the preeminence of the tribe. In the march and encampment in the wilderness Judah moved first (Num. 2:9). It was first in the allotment of the land (Josh. 15:1), and first in war (Judg. 1:1, 2). Finally, the nation received the name Jews, and their land was called Judea.

(2) His Conquest—"thy hand shall be on the neck

of thine enemies." It was the tribe set apart especially for war, and it should be successful. Caleb was the first of the tribe to lay his hand on the neck of the enemies when in the land of promise he conquered the portion allotted to Judah (Josh. 14:6-15:63). The further fulfillment is seen in David who totally subdued all of Israel's enemies.

(3) His Character. In fierceness and power he is "a lion." There is in the descriptive matter a gradation in thought reaching a climax. As "a lion's whelp," he is active; "as a lion" full-grown, like the king of the forest, he is to have his regal sway; and "as a lioness," the fiercest of all, he is to be irresistible in attack. The city of David was called "Ariel, the lion of God" (Isa. 29:1 and marg.). And our Lord, who was David's son, is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" who "hath overcome" (Rev. 5:5). This language informs us that Jehovah made Judah the invincible champion of His cause until the Messiah came who will finally destroy every foe (Rev. 19:11-16).

(4) His royalty. v. 10. Three important facts are contained in this announcement:

(a) From this tribe will come kings among the chosen people, for "scepter" and "ruler's staff" imply power to govern and give laws. This began to be fulfilled in David who was the first king from the tribe of Judah.

(b) The duration of power is determined—"until Shiloh come." The name Shiloh is derived from the Hebrew Shalach, meaning to send. In the Targum of Onkelos, the most learned and authoritative of all Jewish Talmudists, it is rendered Messiah, which means the anointed. The passage has always been regarded as Messianic both by Jews and Christians. The New Testament record meets these two meanings connected with Shiloh. It states that Jesus was sent of God (Jno. 20:21; 3:34), and that He was anointed of God (Acts 10:38).

Moreover, the tribe of Judah had royal representa-

tives t'll the time of the Messiah's birth. At one time this part of the prophecy came perilously near being defeated (2 Kings 11:1-21), but God saw it through. It is true that during the captivity in Babylon no king of Judah reigned, but the tribe still had its "princes" some of whom returned from Babylon (Neh. 9:38; 12:31, 32). After the Captivity, although the Jews were subject to Persia, Greece and Rome, a great deal of self-government was allowed them which continued until their city was destroyed in 70 A. D. However, the real fulfillment is no doubt marked by Herod the Great, who was an Idumean and the first foreigner to reign over the Jews. With him the scepter departed forever from Judah, but in his reign Jesus was born! Later Judah's distinction as a tribe was lost through mingling with the others, which is a further proof of the accuracy of this prophecy.

(c) The Messiah's subjects. "Unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be." This indicates transfer of power from Judah to Shiloh, and that not one race but many were to render unto Him willing and cheerful obedience. This began to be fulfilled on Pentecost in 34 A. D., in Jerusalem, when three thousand came under scepter in one day. Soon after myriads of the Gentiles flocked to His standard, and today He is the most remarkable ruler the world has ever seen.

(5) His wealth vs. 11, 12. "Binding his foal unto the vine" is a symbol of dignity and wealth. "His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" speaks of the productiveness of the land of Judah. The soil near Hebron and Engedi was rich in vineyards and flowed with milk and honey.

4. Zebulun 13. He should "dwell at the haven of the sea" and "be for a haven of ships," which indicates that his descendants should be a maritime and commercial people. This was fulfilled when the land was divided by Lot among the tribes (Josh. 19:10-16). According to the

boundaries given, the land of Zebulun reached from the Sea of Galilee to Mount Carmel. Moses said he should "suck the abundance of the seas" (Deut. 33:19). His fishermen were on the Sea of Galilee and his merchants navigated the Mediterranean as traders in company with their Phœnician neighbors.

5. Issachar 14, 15. Concerning his character and destiny the following is disclosed:

(1) He should be a burden-bearer—"A strong ass." History tells us that this tribe was given to agriculture; that it was patient in tillage and powerful in war. Its agricultural blessing was pronounced by Moses in the words, "rejoice . . . Issachar in thy tents" (Deut. 33:18). That it was powerful in war is seen in Judg. 5:15; I Chr. 7:1-5.

(2) He lacked ambition—"couching down between the sheepfolds." As a lazy nomad, who enjoyed the fruits of the fertile inheritance, he would stretch himself at ease between his cattle-pens. Such is the history of the tribe.

(3) "A servant under task work." The tribe was located in Lower Galilee, in the midst of the Canaanites. There, in order to remain in a rich agricultural country, it put up with oppression that it might labor in quietude and enjoy ease at the cost of liberty.

6. Dan 16, 17.

(1) "Shall judge," according to the meaning of his name. Although he was Jacob's son by the bondmaid Bilhah, he should have equal rule with the sons of Leah and Rachel. No doubt in his person he judged his people. However, it is certain he judged in Samson who was of this tribe (Judg. 13-15).

(2) "Shall be a serpent." This tribe would practice cunning and strategy in obtaining its purpose. For history on this see Judg. 15:4, 5; 16:26-30; 18. As a horse bitten by the adder throws his rider who would be at the mercy of the reptile, so Dan unsuspected would get

into the control of his enemies. This language may also imply condemnation, and may refer to the introduction of idolatry in Israel by the tribe of Dan and the consequent judgment (Judg. 18). As the adder's poison causes death, so idolatry would result in separation from God.

7. Gad 19. His name means a troop, which is in harmony with the character of the tribe, for the Gadites were mighty men of war (I Chr. 5:18; 12:8). They had their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan and were often called upon to defend it.

(1) "A troop shall press upon him." He should be invaded by the Arab tribes about him. This came to pass, for the Moabites, Ammonites, and Syrians attacked and plundered the descendants of Gad (Judg. 10:7, 8; Jer. 49:1).

(2) "He shall press upon their heel." He should pursue the invaders and be victorious. This was fulfilled in the time of the Judges (Judg. 11, 12), and in the reigns of Saul and David when the Moabites and Ammonites were wholly subdued (I Sam. 11:1-11; I Chr. 5:18-22; II Sam. 8).

8. Asher 20. His name, which means blessed, served as an allusion to the rich and fertile part of the land where this tribe was located. It extended from Mount Carmel to Tyre (Josh. 19:24-31) and was famous for olive oil, grain, and wine—"royal dainties." Cp. Isa. 35:2.

9. Naphtali 21. He should move rapidly like "a hind let loose"; literally, sent for like a scout at the head of the army, thus he brings back "goodly words." The tribe was located northward from the Sea of Galilee where it was exposed to the attacks of Assyria and Babylon, hence had to do a great deal of running.

10. Joseph 22-26. At last Jacob's favorite son, the first child of his beloved Rachel, comes into the line of vision. Joseph means added to, and the blessing bestowed upon him is in accord with this, for it promised excessive fruitfulness.

(1) A numerous posterity 22. He is likened to a fruitful tree with spreading branches, planted by a flowing mountatin. The male descendants of Joseph by Ephraim and Manasseh who were fit for war, amounted to 72,700 at the first census (Num. 1:32-35). So greatly had they multiplied in the days of Joshua that additional territory had to be given them (Josh. 17:17, 18).

(2) His past sufferings and triumphs. 23, 24. It seems that his brethren are here figuratively spoken of as archers who out of hatred shot at him their arrows of bitter speeches and harsh words (Gen. 37:4). "But his bow abode in strength . . . by the Mighty One of Jacob." In the face of the machinations of his brethren and his affliction in Egypt, he did not weaken in faith and character, and his political power was next to that of the king of Egypt.

(3) His future blessing 25, 26. The God of his fathers would "help" him in difficulties and dangers, and "bless" him above his progenitors with water for the land and with abundant offspring. These blessings should be durable and extensive as "the exerlasting hills," and should rest as an adorning crown on the head of Joseph.

11. Benjamin 27. The blessing on him, whose name means a ravening wolf, foretells that his descendants should be a fighting people. Such is the history of this tribe, it being the most warlike of the twelve. cp. Judg. 3:15-30; 20:12-16. Saul the Benjamite and his son are famous in history as great warriors.

Conclusion

Reflection on Jacob's last counsel to and dying blessings upon his twelve sons results in certain reactions by the unbiased and teachable mind.

1. Jacob was a prophet of God. Destructive critics affirm that this prophecy is a forgery of later time, from Joshua onward. This is against the claim of the Bible, for it reports Jacob as speaking things which should be-

fall his twelve sons "in the latter days." Why, then, should anybody try to show that the matters of this prophecy were first enacted and afterwards predicted? If this is forgery and interpolation, nobody has any ground for believing there is one honest word in the Bible. Besides, "the latter days" did not terminate with Joshua, when the tribes possessed the land, but, as seen in Judah's blessing, reach to the Messianic era. Further, Jacob's age is against this theory. He was an aged feeble man in mind and body when he spoke these clear vigorous thoughts in the most sublime style, and then "yielded up the ghost." Surely anyone can see that his speech bears the divine signature. Again, the prophecy is a development of the previous Messianic promises. The seed of the woman becomes the seed of Abraham, which is safeguarded in the family of Jacob, who now designates Judah as the Messiah's tribe. How could he point out this advance step in the divine plan without divine guidance?

2. Shiloh is the focal point in the patriarch's vision. Around that center and with reference to its realization, the blessings of the tribes are arranged. Standing at this distance, with the complete history in our hands, we can see clearly the interaction of the several tribal characteristics and their united accomplishments, religiously and politically, relative to the Messianic goal. The unveiling of this historical picture becomes one of the most thought-provoking and soul-stirring exercises ever engaged in by man. Who but the Almighty could design the portrait and so perfectly blend the strange colors and shadows and lights as to bring out the wonderful glory of the Messiah?

3. There is tribal honor and distinction. This is viewed particularly in relation to the birth-right which, as we have seen, included headship of the family, the priesthood, and a double inheritance. These honors and privileges were denied Reuben the firstborn, on account of

his defective character, and given to others. To Judah was given royal power, or authority to rule and from this tribe came all the kings of Judah and the Savior Himself. To Levi was awarded the priesthood, to serve in things pertaining to the Tabernacle, so that this tribe stands for religion in Jewish history. From it came Moses and Aaron. To Joseph, that is, to his two sons, was given the property of the birth-right (I Chr. 5:1). In the parental blessing an extra portion above his brethren was bestowed on him. The distribution of these honors marks a transition from the family to the nation soon to be formed, hence it is a forward move in the divine plan.

CHAPTER VII

BALAAM'S PROPHECIES

Num. 22:41; 24:25

The Israelites were encamped in the land of Moab on the east side of the Jordan opposite Jericho. In their journey hither they had destroyed in battle the Canaanites, the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan (21:1-35). These victories of Israel struck the Moabites and their king Balak with terror, and they with their Midianite allies looked about for help against this nation defended by its God. From Israel's past history Balak despaired of the power of his own deities, and he resolved to deprive Jehovah's people of the aid of their God.

At Pethor on the banks of the Euphrates lived Balaam, a renowned "soothsayer" who practiced "enchantments" in the name of Jehovah (Num. 22:1-35; 24: 1; Josh. 13:22). From this we infer that this prophet was a backslider who had mixed heathen magic and soothsaying with Jehovah-worship and prophecy. To him Balak sent the following message: "Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me." "The rewards of divination" brought by Balak's messengers so overpowered the avaricious prophet that he went with them to curse Israel, although Jehovah told him not to go and sent his angel "for an adversary against him." Having arrived in the land of Moab he makes three attempts to curse Israel; but each time by the lips hired to curse, God pronounced a blessing upon His people.

I. From the High Places of Baal. 22:41; 23:12

From this elevation the whole camp of Israel could be seen. Balak reasoned that Balaam must see all of the people in order to make his curse effective. After seven altars had been built and sacrifices offered to secure the favor of Jehovah, the first prophecy was delivered.

1. A separate people. "Lo, it is a people that dwelleth

alone, And shall not be reckoned among the nations." How could Balaam declare this extraordinary future of Israel? Here was a people he had not seen or known, yet he foretold what afterwards became history. By virtue of their peculiar form of government the Israelites were separated politically, religiously, morally and socially from the nations about them. Finally, after they were rejected by Jehovah because they refused to receive their Messiah, they have to this day been scattered among the nations, but not mixed with any other people. Except in commerce, they live alone in religion, marrying, and other customs. Other nations when conquered have generally been assimilated with the conquerors, but not so the Jews. The wonder grows when we recall that the ancient nations of the world, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome have perished without trace, but a Jew is still a Jew wherever found.

2. A numerous people. "Who can count the dust of Jacob, or number the fourth part of Israel?" Their number was the thing that troubled Balak (22:3) and Balaam promoted that fear by foretelling their future increase. Before this Jehovah had said to Abraham, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth" (Gen. 13:16) and now this prophet owns the fulfilling of that promise. He heightens the fear by declaring that even "the fourth part of Israel" shall be innumerable. Their history proves the correctness of this prediction. Through special providence they grew into a mighty host until they were reduced in numbers on account of disobedience to the divine covenant. Since their city has been destroyed they have for two millenniums been wanderers over the face of the earth, still at present they number 15,555,000. Does not this show that God has not forgotten His people, and that their history is yet unfinished?

3. An ardent desire. "Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my last end be like his!" This refers

not only to a peaceful death, but also to that which follows—the future life. Possessing as he did a knowledge of God and a divine revelation of human destiny, Balaam knew there was a difference between the death of an Israelite and a heathen, and the yearning of his better self was to experience that of the former. Concerning the godly, note for instance the faith of Jacob (Gen. 48:15, 16) and the confidence of Job (Job 19:25-27). The obedient believer knew that in death he would be “gathered unto his people.” (Gen. 49:33). But “what is the hope of the ungodly?” In his earnest desire the backslidden prophet testified to the fact that “their Rock is not our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” (Deut. 32:31).

But this son of Beor saw something else in the future of God's people when he expressed this wish. Speaking not of himself altogether but moved by the divine Spirit, he saw Israel's spiritual glory that was to be theirs through their coming Messiah who would “save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). The vision unquestionably included also the final restoration of this unfortunate race “when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25-27). Now that the first two parts of this prophecy have been fulfilled, can anyone doubt the accomplishment of the third?

II. From Mount Pishgah 23:13-26

When the first oracle, uttered from the heights of Baal where the whole camp of Israel could be seen, proved so completely opposed to Balak's wish, he proposed to try another place where Balaam could “not see them all.” He concluded that the vision of the whole camp had overpowered the mind of the prophet; and to prevent a recurrence of failure, he selected a spot from which only a small portion of Israel could be seen. After seven altars had been built and sacrifices offered, Jehovah again put words into Balaam's mouth.

1. Balak's failure against Israel. 19-23. He was in-

formed that there was no hope of accomplishing Israel's ruin because of the following reasons:

(1) Jehovah is unchangeable. "God is not a man that he should lie, etc." Being all-wise, He makes no miscalculations or mistakes, and consequently knows no repentance. He had bound Himself by their inheritance, with a numerous posterity, with protection against enemies, with increase from the field and from flocks and herds. His word was out and His mind could not be changed, as Balak supposed. The only word Balaam could speak was: "He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it."

(2) Israel is unblameable. "Jehovah hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob." At times there were individuals, and even generations of unbelieving and disobedient Israelites, but the nation as a whole was sanctified unto God and "beloved for the father's sake"—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom. 11:28).

(3) "Enchantment" and "divinations" are ineffectual. "Surely there is no enchantment with (marg. against) Jacob; Neither is there any divination with Israel." In these words Balaam owned his defeat. He confessed that his magic and soothsaying could not prevail against a people shielded by the Almighty. They defied all the sorcery of the East, a fact which profoundly impressed the prophet.

2. Israel's future 23, 24. "Now shall it be said of Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought!" The time would come when the nations around would be astonished at Jehovah's mighty deeds for and through his people. Like a lion Israel would rise from his lair and would not lie down again "until he eat of the prey, and drink of the blood of the slain." This was fulfilled in their victories under Joshua, during the period of the Judges and in the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. To Balak the prediction pointed out that Moab was in

peril, and it served as a warning lest they also might be destroyed by this unconquerable people.

As the reader surveys Israel's history, he too is compelled to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" With wonder and amazement he reads how they were led into and out of Egypt. How they were conveyed through the sea, the wilderness, and the Jordan. How they expelled the inhabitants from the land of promise and settled there in their stead. And how Providence shaped their future history with reference to that salvation which "is of the Jews" (John 4:22). According to the divine purpose, righteousness in the earth was the beginning and is the end of this people. They are the channel through which God has determined to bless "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:3). And the admiration through all eternity will be, what has God done for the world through the Jews!

III. From Mount Peor. 23:27-24:25.

The amazed and disappointed Balak next hurried the prophet to the summit of Peor in the hope of a more favorable utterance. There Baal, the chief god of Moab was worshiped, hence the name Baal-peor (Num. 25:5). As a last resort, Balak decides to add the power of his own god. The same ceremony of preparation was employed as before, but the diviner made no profession of mystery "as at the other times, to meet with enchantments." "The Spirit of God came upon him," and the man whose eyes had been closed to things hidden from the ordinary beholder, was given "the vision of the Almighty."

1. Israel's future glory. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob." The prophet saw Israel peacefully settled in Canaan with its fruitful valleys and rushing streams. In highly poetic language he proceeded to announce the future history of this people.

(1) Their numerical increase. They should "spread forth as a garden" by the prophet's own Euphrates, as

the aromatic "lingaloes" imported from the far East, and as the wide-spreading "cedar-trees" of Lebanon. They should be prolific as the soil irrigated by water carried in "buckets," according to oriental custom, until the seed was flooded "in many (or abundant) waters."

(2) Their political power. They should have a king "higher than Agag," a general name for the rulers of the powerful Amalekites who were the most warlike of all nations confronting Israel at that time. This was fulfilled in the person of Saul, who at the beginning of his reign triumphed over Agag and destroyed his people (I Sam. 15). In conflict with enemies they should be powerful as "the wild-ox." After the victory they will lie down in quietness and courage "as a lion," which was true especially in the days of David and Solomon, and woe to him who should rouse them.

No wonder "Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam," for what he had spoken concerning Israel was not a curse but a blessing. But the prophet was not yet done. Once more he speaks for Jehovah, and his last oracle passes far beyond the range of Hebrew history. He introduced the prophecy with these words: "And now, behold, I go unto my people; Come, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in latter days."

2. Relation of Israel to the heathen world. 24:15-24.

One by one the kingdoms of this world passed before the eyes of the prophet and he saw them fall before the people of God.

(1) The parable against Moab and Edom. 15-19. "Not now," but in the future, there should arise "a star out of Jacob and a scepter out of Israel." These are symbols of a powerful ruler who should "smite through the corners of Moab" and possess Edom. That this first of all refers to David history confirms, for "he smote Moab and measured them with the line" (II Sam. 8:2). Edom also he possessed, for "he put garrisons in Edom;

throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David." (II Sam. 8:14). But primarily and more remotely this prophecy refers to the Messiah of whom David was a type. The total extinction of the Moabites and Edomites here predicted did not take place under David, for they recovered their freedom (2 Kings 1:1; 3:5), and are later spoken of as Israel's enemies who should be destroyed (Isa. 15:16; Jer. 48). Having seen the glory of David's reign, the prophet saw beyond it the glory and power of the reign of Christ over all nations. He is glorified as "the bright, the morning star" (Rev. 22:16) and being now seated on the throne of David according to promise (Ps. 72:8; Acts 2:29-36), he sways the scepter to Israel.

(2) The parable against Amalek 20. "Amalek was the first of the nations" to war against the Israelites after they left Egypt (Ex. 17:8-16). At that time this sentence was pronounced upon them. "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." Balaam unwittingly confirmed this judgment when he said, "his latter end shall come to destruction." The execution of the sentence was begun by Saul (I Sam. 15), continued by David (I Sam. 27:8, 9; 30), and completed under Hezekiah, king of Judah, when the sons of Simeon "smote the remnant of the Amalekites that escaped, and have dwelt there unto this day" (I Chr. 4:43). This was predicted over four hundred years before it came to pass, and so accurately has it been fulfilled that not a trace or a tradition of the Amalekites are found anywhere in the world today.

(3) The parable against the Kenites 21, 22.

At the time of the exodus, this people were dwelling near Sinai, for Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was a Kenite (Judg. 1:16). There in the wilds of the mountains they dwelt in security, like the eagle in his nest

among the rocks. The tribe divided in the person of Heber, who moved north to Kedesh in Naphtali (Judg. 4:11). For some reason this powerful Arab tribe should be "wasted." This was fulfilled in the days of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, when under the name of Rechabites they had been wasted to such an extent as to have need of refuge within the walls of Jerusalem (Jer. 35:1-11).

The prophet also announced that they should be carried captive by Asshur (Assyria). The northern Kenites in all probability were taken to Assyria with the ten tribes of Israel (2 Kings 16:9), while those in the south went into captivity with Judah. After the captivity they are mentioned as being among the Jews (I Chr. 2:55).

(4) The parable against Assyria 24. The last heathen nation to pass before the prophet was his own Assyria. Its overthrow so terrorized and amazed him that he exclaimed, "who shall live when God doeth this?" Its destruction was to be effected by "ships from the coast of Kittim," the original name for Cyprus. Since that island was the principal commercial center of the West, the ships from Kittim would here stand for the countries of the West. "They shall afflict Asshur (Assyria) and Eber" (the people east of the Euphrates). History tells us that this was accomplished by Alexander the Great, who was the first from the West to invade the East successfully after this prophecy had been delivered. In 330 B. C. he completed the conquest of the Medo-Persian kingdom, which marks the end of the great Asiatic powers.

"And he also shall come to destruction." The power that should destroy Assyria should itself be destroyed. Here is a most wonderful prediction, delivered about thirteen hundred years before the event, and no human ingenuity can rob it of its divine element. When the Romans completed the conquest of the Grecian empire in 146 B. C., the truthfulness of this part of Balaam's prophecy was established forever.

Conclusion

In this chapter there are some things which call for special attention.

1. The prophet himself. He was not a friend of God's plan and people, but one "who loved the hire of wrongdoing" (2 Pet. 2:15). He was hired to curse Israel, but was constrained to bless him. Therefore, what he uttered was testimony concerning God's purpose from the camp of opposers. There is no difficulty here. God simply used the man's mouth to speak the words of rebuke to those who would oppose Israel. It distinctly states that "the Spirit of God came upon him," and that "Jehovah put a word in his mouth." We find an instance of like character in the New Testament. Caiaphas prophesied that Christ should die for the people, but John gives the explanation that "this he said not of himself" (John 11:49-52).

2. The speaking ass. Much ridicule has been indulged in by skeptics and scoffers concerning Balaam's speaking ass. Everyone of them takes a ride on this long-eared beast of burden, and loads him down with allegory and fable. They deny the veracity of God's word, which says that "Jehovah opened the mouth of the ass" (Num. 22:28), and that "a dumb ass spake with a man's voice and stayed the madness of the prophet" (2 Pet. 2:16). They are forced to take this view of the case because they assume that miracles are impossible on the ground of natural law. The idea that the Lawgiver is superior to His law does not seem to enter their heads.

3. The prophet's message. In many respects this is a most wonderful prophecy. He outlines the history of Israel and other nations for more than thirteen hundred years. Israel's future is to be that of peace, plenty, and power—all of which is proved true by their history. By speaking of Jacob's Star and Israel's Scepter, he points out Israel's glory, realized first in David's

victories and finally in the Messiah who shall triumph over every foe and rule all nations. The kingdoms of the heathen world shall fall on account of their hostility towards the people of God. Five of these nations are named and one is referred to without name, and history discloses that the destiny of each was just what the prophet said it should be. Anyone reading Balaam's prophecy with the aid of history and with an honest mind, is compelled to feel that God is in his word.

CHAPTER VIII

THE JEWS

Deut. 28:1-68

The work of Moses was done and the time had come for the word of farewell to his people, the contents of which make up the book of Deuteronomy. The time and place of this eloquent and memorable message was "the fortieth year" of Israel's journey out of Egypt, "beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab" (1:3, 5). Among other things, he spoke of "blessings" and "curses" consequent upon obedience or disobedience to Jehovah's law. Arrangement was made which was calculated to impress indelibly upon the minds of the people the certain and far-reaching effect of obedience and disobedience (see Deut. 27; Josh. 8:30-35). As soon as they were come into Canaan, they should set up "great stones and plaster them with plaster" on which should be inscribed "the blessing and the curse according to all that is written in the book of the law." An altar they should also build for sacrifices on the occasion, the significance of which was that law and atonement go together. Six tribes were to stand before the well-watered and productive mount Gerizim to bless the people and six in front of the naked and barren mount Ebal for the curse. At the close of reading the blessings and the curses the people should say "Amen," thus registering their approval of the covenant and accepting all its consequences as true, just and certain. Having thus enjoined in striking solemnity the blessings and the curses, Moses next enlarged upon them and described in detail their character and effect.

I. The Blessings of Obedience. 1-14.

Six repetitions of the word "blessed" introduce that many kinds of blessings to be enjoyed by Israel on the condition that "thou shalt harken unto the voice of Jehovah, thy God."

“Blessed shalt thou be”:

1. In the city. They had been promised “great and goodly cities, and houses full of good things” (Deut. 6:10, 11). There they should be protected from enemies, have plenty of provisions, and prosper in all kinds of business. They were impressed with the fact that “Except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain” (Ps. 127:1).

2. In the field. As tillers of the soil they should not labor in fear or in vain. Their crops would not be destroyed by insects, wild beasts, or drought; neither would their person suffer from wild animals and still wilder men.

3. In reproduction and increase. The fruit of the body gave them a numerous posterity. Numbers were important to Israel’s national greatness and power among the nations of the world. Their great prolific characteristic was a testimony to God’s interest in them, for “all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed” (Isa. 61:9).

The fruit of the ground would insure them an abundance for their own consumption and for their stock. God had promised to care for the land and enrich it with treasures from on high. “The eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year;” to “give the rain of your land in its season” (Deut. 11:12-15).

The fruit of the beasts gave them an ever increasing wealth of camels, asses, oxen, cows, sheep, and goats. This and other increases noted would minister to their happiness and material enjoyment of life (see Ps. 144: 12-15).

4. In basket and kneading-trough. The basket for holding bread (Gen. 40:17; Lev. 8:2) should not be empty, and the kneading trough in which the loaves were prepared (Ex. 12:34) should never lack dough.

5. In coming in. When they returned home at even

tide for rest from their labors, Jehovah's benediction would be upon them in the enjoyment of the family fellowship and the teaching of the law to their children (Deut. 6:7). On retiring they would feel secure in divine protection during the night, for "he giveth His beloved sleep" (Ps. 128:2).

6. In going out. While away from home success and safety would attend them in their labors during the day, or in their journeys. When all the males appeared before Jehovah at the three yearly feasts—Passover, First-fruits, and Ingathering—the Keeper of Israel would guard family and property against every foe (Ex. 34:24). When they went out to war with their enemies, victory was assured before hand. "I will send my terror before thee, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee" (Ex. 23:27). "They shall come out against thee one way, and shall flee before thee seven ways."

Let it be observed that all these blessings are temporal and have to do with this life only: not one of them extends to the life beyond. This is a marked feature of the Mosaic law which is generally overlooked by present-day teachers of Christianity who mix the Law and the Gospel. Moreover, there is in these blessings a marvelous display of divine providence which would set the chosen people "on high above all the nations of the earth." By these particular favors they were given distinction of wealth, social prestige, and political influence enjoyed by noother nation. To Israel only has it been said: "thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And Jehovah will make thee the head and not the tail."

II. The Curse of Disobedience

In verses 15-19 these curses are given as the exact counterparts of the six blessings. In effect they should be a "rebuke" to Israel "because of the evil of thy doings" (20). In severity and duration they should be

upon them "until thou perish, until thou be destroyed" (23, 24). As a final effect upon Jews and Gentiles they should be "for a sign and for a wonder" (46). This they have proved to be, for in all the annals of human history there is nothing so amazing and astonishing as the unspeakable misfortunes of the Jews.

1. Bodily ailments. "Jehovah will make the pestilence cleave unto thee," literally stick inseparably as glue and without intermission, "until he have consumed thee from off the land" (21). He will "smite thee with consumption," a gradual wasting of life; "and with fever," a hot burning in the face; "and with inflammation," an extreme burning either in the lungs or from ulcers. All of this dreadful misery should be augmented by the "fiery heat" of the land (22). They should be smitten with loathsome diseases such as "the boil of Egypt" (27), a black leprosy with which the Egyptians were plagued (Ex. 9:9), "with emerods," or tumors, "and with the itch." They should suffer from "a sore boil" (35), the incurable leprosy which would affect the whole body and separate them from men. "And I will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt" (60), a land cursed above all other lands with disease and death. "Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of the law, them will Jehovah bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed" (61). This awful stroke of bodily afflictions, with all its accumulated weight of misery and terror, has fallen upon them because they would not do all the words of Jehovah's law and "fear His glorious and fearful name."

2. Famine. The curse should rest upon vegetation (23, 24). "Jehovah will smite thee with blasting, and with mildew" to destroy the grain, grass, and herbs. The heaven above should be dry as "brass" and the earth beneath hard and unfruitful as "iron." Instead of rain, a burning siroco, the hot wind from the desert, would make of the land "powder and dust." From plenti-

ful sewing and large orchards there should be meager returns (38-40). "The locust shall consume" the grain, "the worm shall eat the grapes," and the "olive shall cast its fruit." For fulfillment of this see I Kings 17, 18; Jer. 14:1-6; Joel 1:1-4.

3. Defeat in war. They should be utterly routed before their enemies (25). "Thou shalt go out one way against them, and shalt flee seven ways before them: and thou shalt be tossed to and fro," like a foot-ball, "among all the kingdoms of the earth." This has been their fortune from the time of the Babylonian captivity unto this hour. (cp. 2 Chr. 29:8; Jer. 15:4; 24:9; 29:18). "And thy dead body shall be for food unto all the birds of the heavens, and unto the beasts of the earth" (26). Than this, a greater calamity could not come to a Jew. For this reason Jeremiah threatened it as a punishment of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (22:19; 36:30); and the Psalmist speaks of it in his lamentation over Jerusalem (79:2, 3).

4. Mental diseases. God's judgment upon them should affect the mind as well as the body. "Jehovah will smite thee with madness, and with blindness, and with astonishment of heart" (28). Insanity and confusion of mind would make them a terror to themselves and cause their own destruction. This was the case in the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. Jeremiah counselled them to surrender, saying, "He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out, and passeth over to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey" (21:9). But in their madness and blindness they refused his advice and a great number perished in the destruction of the devoted city. When Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, they manifested the same obstinate resistance against the Roman army without the least prospect of escaping. It happened unto them according to the saying: "Those

whom God wishes to destroy, he first makes mad." They should also be blind to their own spiritual welfare (29). "And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness." Their opinions concerning Christ so blinded them that they could not see Him when He came (Matt. 13:14, 15). They expected Him to set up an earthly political kingdom and liberate them from the Romans. When He did not do that, "their minds were hardened," and even now, notwithstanding the light of the gospel, "a veil lieth upon their hearts" so they cannot see the supernal glory of their Messiah (2 Cor. 3:14, 15).

5. Oppression and insult. They should be deprived of domestic happiness and material wealth (30-34, 41). "Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people." and this is not all. "Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not use the fruit thereof. Thine ox shalt be slain before thine eyes, thine ass shalt be violently taken away from before thy face; thy sheep shalt be given unto thine enemies; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away." For fulfillment of this see 2 Kings 5:2; 2 Chr. 29:9; Neh. 9:36, 37. Space forbids citation of more instances, but history records how governments have fined and fleeced the Jews; how kings, popes, and councils, by edicts and canons, have separated children from parents.

6. Captivity. "Jehovah will bring thee and thy king whom thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation thou hast not known" (36). This utterance is most remarkable, since the Jews at the time of its delivery had no king. It was fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity when Israel and Judah with their Kings were carried captive (2 Kings 17:4-6; 24:14, 15). In that strange country they should be compelled to "serve other gods, wood and stone." Of this one instance is recorded in Dan. 3:1-7.

It is also pointed out by writers that in countries where the Romish church has been dominant, the Jews bow down to images of wood and stone rather than endanger their lives and goods. Basnage in his history of the Jews says, "The Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions reduced them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites or burnt. The number of these dissemblers is very considerable." (Book VII c 33, Sec. 14, quoted by Newton on the Prophecies).

7. Destruction by a foreign foe (49-51). Here are several particulars which were true of both the Chaldean and Roman invasions.

"Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from far." Jeremiah used the same language in speaking of the Chaldeans (5:15). The Romans lived far to the west of Palestine, and their army of sixty thousand men was composed of Gauls, Britons, Spaniards, and some who had fought in Africa, hence of remote families and nations. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book III. 4).

In rapidity of conquest the enemy would be swift "as the eagle flieth." Such were the Chaldeans (Lam. 4:19), but much more so the Romans. Josephus speaks of their astonishing swiftness in constructing defenses and taking cities. Their ensign was also the eagle, "the king and strongest of all birds which seems to them a signal of dominion, and an omen that they shall conquer all against whom they march" (Wars B. III. 6.).

They should be "a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand." Though this was true of the Chaldeans (Jer. 5:15), it is more appropriately applied to the Romans, whose language was unknown in Judea. Josephus speaks of the difficulties that arose because the Roman language was unintelligible to the Jews.

They are further characterized as "a nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young." Such were the Chaldeans, who had no regard for age nor sex (2 Chr.

36:17). Such were also the Romans, whose fiery eyes and wild countenance made them look furious. Josephus tells us that when Vespasian took Gadara, he "slew all the youth, the Romans having no mercy on any age whatsoever" (Wars, B. III. 7. 1.).

They should also "eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy ground." Josephus informs us that the Romans did this by imposing taxes on the Jews and by plundering Judea and every city they took during that fearful war of more than four years.

8. Beseiged. 52-57. "And they shall beseige thee in all thy gates." This was done by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, who took Samaria (2 Kings 18:9, 10); by Sennacherib, another Assyrian king, who came "against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them" (2 Kings 18:13); and by Nebuchadnezzar, who "burnt the house of Jehovah and brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about" (2 Kings 25:9, 10). The Romans also fulfilled this prophecy. Josephus records the sieges and desolation wrought by them of the principal cities; such as Gadara, Jotapata, Japha, Joppa, Tiberias, Tarrichae, Gamala, Gischala, and Jerusalem. (See Wars, Books III, IV, V, VI).

The terrible consequences of the siege are foretold. "Thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and daughters." So great was the famine during the siege of Samaria that a mother boiled and ate her own son (2 Kings 6:28, 29). It was also fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, and Jeremiah lamented it in these words: "The hands of the pitiful women have boiled their own children" (Lam. 4:10). It was further fulfilled when Jerusalem was beseiged by the Romans and taken by Titus. Moses said that "the tender and delicate young woman among you" shall eat her own children "in the siege and in the distress." And Josephus tells us that a certain woman whose name was Mary, "slew her son; and then roasted

him, and ate one-half of him, and kept the other half by her, concealed" (Wars, B. VI. 3. 4.).

9. Great destruction of life. "And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude" (62). The number of Jews killed when Samaria and Jerusalem were taken by the Assyrians is insignificant compared with the great number destroyed when the Romans took their city. Josephus states that 1,100,000 were killed and 97,000 taken prisoners. The multitude crucified "was so great that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies" Wars. B. V. 9. 3; 11. 1.). From the same author Basnage has computed that 1,240,490 suffered death in Jerusalem and other parts of the country during the Roman campaign (Hist. of the Jews. B. I. 8. 19.).

10. Dispersed among the nations. "Ye shall be plucked from off the land. Jehovah will scatter thee among all the peoples, from one end of the earth even unto the other" (63, 64). This would complete their woe. Beginning with Babylonian captivity, this has been literally fulfilled; but more severely in the great dispersion by the Romans. In every country on the face of the earth the wandering Jews are found. So uncertain should their life be among strangers that "In the morning thou shalt say, Would it were even! and at even thou shalt say, would it were morning!" (67). They should even go back to Egypt again as slaves. "Jehovah will bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I said unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again" (68). This, too, has been fulfilled. When the Roman soldiers grew tired of killing them, Fronto, a friend of Caesar, "chose out the tallest and most beautiful; and reserved them for the triumph; and as for the rest of the multitude that were about seventeen years old, he put them into bonds, and sent them to the Egyptian mines" (Wars. B. VI. 9. 2.). They have become "an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among the peoples," as Moses

said they should be. Their money-getting propensities and sharp dealings have made them universally despised, the feeling of which is lodged in the name Jew.

Other prophets besides Moses have spoken of the fortunes and destiny of apostate Israel. For convenience to the interested student, a few of the many passages available are here given. Captivity of Judah and Israel in Babylon (Jer. 25:11; Isa. 7:8). Their restoration after seventy years (Jer. 29:10; Ezek. 37:1-14). Their dispersion among the nations of the earth (Jer. 9:16; Hos. 9:17). Their preservation (Jer. 46:28). Their spiritual restoration through the Messiah (Hos. 3:4, 5; Jer. 31:10-14, 31-34).

Conclusion

From this prophecy the following deductions appear important:

1. The happiness and prosperity resulting from obedience to God's revealed will. One principle of life and its attendant promise read: "Righteousness exalteth a nation," as it does the individual; and "he that soweth righteousness hath a sure reward" (Prov. 14:34; 11:18). It follows, then, that regard for one's own best interest, temporal and eternal, will urge obedience to the divine law. This in turn will have a telling effect upon the world: "And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee" (Deut. 28:10). It means that Jehovah's name and glory, reflected in human character, will command the respect and receive the homage of the world.

2. The ruinous effect of disobedience. This picture of the Jews in their state of apostasy and exile must convince him who reads these prophecies and ponders their fulfillment that the destruction of this people is a self-wrought ruin. Their miseries are a moral demonstration of the divine law that they that "sow the wind, shall reap the whirlwind"; and that "the wages of sin is

death" (Hos. 8:7; Rom. 6:23). To this end every earthly possession and enjoyment the Jews ever had became an instrument of pain. Even the elements in nature became to them agents of woe. And their own personal condition, physical and mental, was turned into torture and madness in order to teach a rebellious people the divine hatred of sin.

3. The divine inspiration of Moses. It is held by the destructive critics of the Bible that "there is no evidence that the history of the past has been miraculously revealed to any one." But let these gentlemen write the history of the Jews from the time of Moses to the present hour and see if they can add anything to or take anything away from these prophecies. Moses uttered these predictions thirty-five centuries ago. They have been upon the Jews "for a sign and for a wonder" to the nations of succeeding ages. How could he by mere human ingenuity speak these words and have them come true? From these prophecies and the history of their fulfillment the feeblest logician can draw proof enough for the inspiration of Moses. When the chaplain to Frederick the Great of Prussia was asked for proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, he replied, "The Jews." And since it has been demonstrated that Moses was divinely inspired in delivering these prophecies, may it not follow that he was also divinely inspired in writing his law, to the obedience of which these prophecies stand related?

4. Relation of the Jews to the history of the world. In the divine plan of the ages they have become citizens of the world. Since their city was destroyed by Titus in 70 A. D., they have been wanderers among all the nations, and have been without a temple, priesthood, altar, and sacrifice—yet not completely destroyed. Because they have been divinely preserved, for Jehovah said, "I will not make a full end of thee" (Jer. 46:28), they must be preserved for something. In the first place,

by their unwavering faith in the one God, they have been a constant protest against idolatry among the Gentiles. In the next place, they shall have a large part in converting the world to Christ. Speaking of their rejection and final restoration, Paul says, "For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11:15). In other words, their conversion to Christ will result in a great revival among the Gentiles, which is figuratively presented as a resurrection from the dead. The Jews have religious zeal, they control the money of the world, and they are found in every nation under heaven. They were the first human instrument in redeeming the world from sin, and they shall be the last. "Salvation is from the Jews" (Jno. 4:22), for from them came the Redeemer; and on account of their great missionary zeal when they shall have been converted, salvation shall come from them to the Gentiles.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAND OF THE JEWS

In the preceding chapter we have noticed divine judgment visited upon Israel's person; in this chapter we shall behold the curse upon his habitation. These prophecies and their fulfillment constitute Jehovah's witness against the offenders of His law, that this retribution did not come upon them without a just cause, or without previous warning. "The earth mourneth, the world languisheth. The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:4, 5). Nothing short of deliberate unbelief and disobedience can account for the extraordinary desolation of this once wonderfully productive land with its many cities and great highways. A careful study of these predictions and the proof of their fulfillment will furnish another unassailable evidence of the truth of prophecy.

1. It should be devoured by strangers. "Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate. Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land becomes utterly waste" (Isa. 1:7; 6:11). It was first devastated by the Chaldeans. After the Jews returned from the captivity, Syria and Egypt impoverished it by extortions and oppressions. Next, the Greeks and Romans carried out the curse of God upon this land. In 622 A. D. the Arabians under Mohammed became its destroyers. After that the Turks got possession of it, and in addition to their vandal hands the Arabs have plundered it continually. Thus destruction has followed destruction until the land became "utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste; for Jehovah hath spoken this word" (Isa. 24:3).

2. It should become a thorny wilderness. "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars" (Isa. 32:13. See also Jer. 12:4, 10-13).

It is almost incredible that this land once so fertile should become such a wilderness. So astonishing is the effect that skeptics deny the truthfulness of the Scriptures which speak of its former productiveness as "a land flowing with milk and honey." But testimony from their own camp is corroborative of the Bible. Volney wrote, "Syria unites different climates under the same sky, and collects within a small compass pleasures and productions which nature has elsewhere dispersed at great distances of time and place . . . With its numerous advantages of climate and soil, it is not astonishing that Syria should have been esteemed a most delightful that Syria should always have been esteemed a most delicious country, and that the Greeks and Romans ranked it among the most beautiful of their provinces, and even thought it not inferior to Egypt." (Volney's *Travels in Egypt and Syria*. Vol. I. pp. 316, 321). Gibbon's testimony is equally decisive. He says, "The heat of the climate is tempered by the vicinity of the sea and mountains, by plenty of wood and water; and the produce of a fertile soil affords the subsistence and encourages the propagation of men and animals. From the age of David to that of Heraclius the country was overspread with ancient and flourishing cities; the inhabitants were numerous and wealthy." (Gibbon, Vol. IX. p. 403).

In so far as the human agency is involved in reducing this land to thorns and thistles, the curse has been accomplished by a great aversion to labor by those who have tilled it and by poor agricultural implements. The excessive taxes levied upon the toilers have disheartened them and made them thriftless and lazy. They say, "What is the use of trying to get money, when the soldiers and governor would eat it all?" Although modern

machinery has been introduced, still a crooked stick is used as a plow which scratches only the top of the ground, and no harrow is employed to cover the sown grain. This is referred to by Volney, who says, "The art of cultivation is in the most deplorable state . . . and no more is sown than is barely necessary for subsistence. Every day I found fields abandoned by the plow." (Volney's Travels, Vol. II. p. 413; Volney's Ruins, ch. 11. p. 7).

The curse upon the land is also carried out by the manifestation of the hand of God in nature. Jehovah told the Jews that if they served and worshipped other gods, he would "shut up the heavens, so that there shall be no rain, and the land shall not yield its fruit: Your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit" (Deut. 11:17; Lev. 26:20). Travelers tell us that this country grows a great variety of thistles, and what may appear as a fair crop of grain is scarcely a half crop after the weeds and thistles have been removed. "The earth," says Volney, "produces only briars and worm-wood" (Volney's Ruins, p. 9).

3. It should be overrun by wild beasts. "I will send the beasts of the field among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number" (Lev. 26:22). These threatenings were fulfilled at different times. Jehovah sent fiery serpents (Num. 21:6), lions (2 Kings 17:25), and bears (2 Kings 2:24). The land has been infested with lions, hyenas, lynxes, wild boars, bears, foxes, wolves, jackals in such numbers that the Bedouins have been compelled to keep fires burning at night by their stock to keep away these animals. These creatures, at the first subject to man, are now in rebellion against him and serve as executioners of God's judgment.

4. Vegetation in the mountains should wither. "Leba-

non is confounded and withered away; Sharon is like a desert; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves; the top of Carmel shall wither" (Isa. 33:9; Amos 1:2). All these places have heard the word of God. Lebanon, all of which was formerly thickly settled and richly cultivated, contains only a few small villages, vineyards, and gardens. Of the stately cedars which once covered the mountains, but a small grove is left and no care is given them. Goats are allowed to eat the young shoots, and the Maronite monks and visitors cut the branches for fuel (cp. Isa. 10:34). The plain of Sharon, famous in the Scriptures for its beauty, has been changed into a treeless desert of ruined villages. Bashan is studded with deserted villages and has neither orchards nor gardens. Carmel, once extensively cultivated and covered with many villages, is now deserted and overgrown with brushwood. When the land was in its glory, the mountains were cultivated to the very tops. Successive terraces were built of stone and filled with soil, but these have been ruined by the elements and the hand of man, so that from the base to summit they present a rocky surface on which, except where cultivated, nothing grows but weeds and thorns.

5. The highways should lie waste. "The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth" (Isa. 33:8). That, too, has come to pass. Anciently there were great highways crossing the land from Syria to Egypt. Besides these there were a great number of roads leading from all the cities of Palestine to Jerusalem, so that Isaiah could say, "their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots" (2:7). So literally has this prophecy been fulfilled that the infidel Volney was compelled to write: "In the interior part of the country there are neither roads, nor canals, nor even bridges over the greatest part of the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. Between town and town there are neither posts nor public convey-

ances. Nobody travels alone, from the insecurity of the roads" (Volney's Travels, Vol. II. pp. 417-419).

6. The holy places should be defiled. "I will also make the pride of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be profaned; and will bring your sanctuaries unto desolation" (Ezek. 7:24; Lev. 26:31). This was done by Antiochus Epiphanes, who was king of Syria from 175-164 B. C. Josephus informs us that, "when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and offered sacrifice, neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods, and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day" (Jos. Ant. XII. 5. 4. See also I Macc. 1). The Romans did this when they destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A. D., Gibbon tells us that, "Sion was deserted; and the vacant space of the lower city was filled with public and private edifices of the Ælian colony, which spread themselves over the adjacent hill of Calvary. The holy places were polluted with the monuments of idolatry; and either by design or accident, a chapel was dedicated to Venus, on the spot which had been sanctified by the death and resurrection of Christ" (World's Best Histories, Rome, Vol. II. c. 23, p. 371). It was also fulfilled when Jerusalem was taken by the Mohammedans in 637 A. D. and the mosque of Omar was erected on the site of Solomon's temple. When Omar entered the city and appeared before the patriarch, Sophronius bowed before his master and muttered the words of Daniel 11:31, "The abomination of desolation is in the holy place."

7. The cities should be destroyed. "I will make your cities a waste." "In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction" (Lev. 26:31; Isa.

24:12). Of these we can only give space to details of the two capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem.

(1) Samaria. Its original site was "the hill of Samaria" (1 Kings 16:24), which gave it protection and marvellous beauty. Isaiah speaks of it as Ephraim's "glorious beauty, which is at the head of the fat valley" (Isa. 28:1). The same prophet said it "shall be trodden under foot" and plucked like "the first-ripe figs" (verses 3, 4). This was accomplished first by the Assyrians who took the city and carried Israel captive (2 Kings 17:5, 6). Next Hyrcanus, the ethnarch of Judea, utterly destroyed it about 100 B. C. According to Josephus, when he had taken the city after a year's siege, "he was not contented with doing that only, but he demolished it entirely, and brought rivulets to it to drown it, for he dug such hollows as might let the water run under it; nay, he took away the very marks that there had ever been such a city there" (Ant. XIII. 10. 3). Later it was rebuilt by Gabinius, proconsul of Syria, and enlarged by Herod the Great. But now only the hill remains on which this city stood, once the capital of the ten tribes in government and wickedness.

The details of its destruction are given by the prophet Micah (1:6). It should be made as "a heap of the field." We are told that the stones out of which it was built are now piled up in heaps and the ground between them is set in olive trees and cultivated in grain (see Keith's *Evidence of Prophecy* and McGarvey's *Lands of the Bible*). "I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley." So strikingly has this been fulfilled that the hewn stones which once were built into the city of Samaria are now found all the way from the top of the hill to the bottom the valley. And they present an appearance, not of having rolled, but of having been cast down, "poured," by the hand of man. "I will uncover the foundations thereof." So completely has it been destroyed that every stone of the superstructure of Eph-

raim's crown of pride has been removed and only the foundations remain. Here kings once lived securely in "houses of ivory," and nobles in mansions of "hewn stone" (Amos 3:15; Isa. 9:10). Here were the royal tombs of Omri, the founder of the city, and his successors (2 Kings 16:28; 22:37; 2 Kings 10:35; etc.). Here were groves for Ashtaroah and a great temple to Baal erected by Ahab for his wife Jezebel (2 Kings 16:30-33). But now every stone is a witness of God's revelation, and every ruin a monument of His judgment on sin.

(2) Jerusalem. "The city of the great King" has been a theme of profound interest to biblical writers and speakers from Moses to Christ and His apostles. Because of its importance, political and religious, more attention has been given it by the prophets than the capital of the ten tribes. Its predicted fate comes upon us with peculiar force and invites our solemn meditation as we behold its ruins.

Jeremiah foretold that its wealth should be taken away by the king of Babylon (20:4, 5). Forty years later the Babylonians burned the city and took away all the vessels of gold and silver, "and the pillars of brass that were in the house of Jehovah" (2 King 25:13-17). Through the same prophet Jehovah announced to Judah, "I will make Jerusalem heaps, a dwelling-place of jackals" (9:11). And thirty-six years before its last overthrow, the Son of God said, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:2). To the people of Jeremiah's day the prophet's words must have seemed incredible, for at that time the city was well fortified and filled with valorous defenders. When Jesus spoke, His words were an astonishment to His disciples, who thought that the temple, because of its great stones, would endure till the end of the world and Christ's second coming. Josephus says, "Of its stones some of them were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth" (Wars. V.

5. 6). But when its cup of iniquity was full, the Chaldeans first and six hundred and fifty-six years later the Romans reduced it to "heaps" which now lie from sixty to a hundred feet deep against its walls. So utterly was it blasted by the curse of God that its rocky ruins became the home of the howling jackals, and there was nothing to relieve its frightful desolation.

The prophet Micah also foretold the evil that should come upon this city. "Zion for your sake shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest" (3:12). The Talmud and Maimonides record that when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, Terentius Rufus, who was left in command of the army, tore up foundations of the temple with a ploughshare. Gibbon confirms this by saying, "After the final destruction of the stately temple of the Jewish nation by Titus and Hadrian, a ploughshare was drawn over the consecrated ground as a sign of perpetual interdiction" (*World's Best Histories*, Rome, Vol. II. p. 371). Since the city's final ruin this prophecy has been in process of fulfillment. Dr. Richardson in his *Travels* says, "At the time when I visited this sacred ground, one part of it supported a crop of barley, another was undergoing the labors of the plough" (*Richardson's Travels* p. 340). The prophet said that the site of the holy city should be so neglected that it would be like "the high places of a forest;" or as wooded heights. Such was its appearance after the sanctuary had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes, for then the Jews saw "shrubs growing up in the courts as in a forest, or on the mountains" (I Macc. 4:38), and it is presumed that such was its appearance for a long time after the Romans had destroyed the place in 70 A. D. At present the ancient city lies buried about eighty feet below the surface of modern Jerusalem. The completeness of destruction predicted concerning Samaria and Jerusalem is also true of

the rest of the cities and villages of the land. Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Chorazin, Cana, Caesarea, Lydda, Nain, Arimathea, Zebulun, Tyre, Sidon, Jericho, Bethel, and all the rest, have been deprived of their former glory and now contain heaps of rubbish and shapeless ruins. So marvellously accurate have the predictions of their desolation been verified, that comparison of what they once were with what they later became overwhelms the mind with the power of God and the certainty of His word.

8. The devastated land should be an astonishment to Jews and strangers. "And the generation to come, your children that shall rise up after you, and the foreigner that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sickness wherewith Jehovah hath made it sick . . . Wherefore hath Jehovah done thus unto this land?" (Deut. 29:22-24). Space is here given to just one testimony, and that from the lips of infidelity, to show the effect the sight of this land has upon men. Volney, when he beheld its wasted fields and ruined cities, exclaimed, "Good God! from whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For what cause is the fortune of these countries so strikingly changed? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not the ancient population reproduced and perpetuated?" (Volney's Ruins, ch. 11, p. 8).

9. Duration of these curses. The Scriptures assign covenant-breaking, idolatry, and rejection of the Messiah as the cause of all these afflictions upon the Jews and their land. "Because they forsook the covenant of Jehovah, and went and served other gods, therefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against this land" (Deut. 29:25-27). In his apostrophe to Jerusalem the Savior said, "how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:37, 38). It

must be clear that the curses will continue as long as the cause remains. The restoration contemplated is both material and spiritual, but it will be accomplished primarily by spiritual means. This is often overlooked by modern interpreters of prophecy. Isaiah declares that "the palace shall be forsaken; the populous city shall be deserted; the hill and the watch-tower shall be for dens forever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks, until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field" (32:14, 15). Paul speaks very definitely how it shall be done by quoting from one of the Old Testament prophets. "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. By this Deliverer God will "take away their sins" (Rom. 11:26, 27). It follows, therefore, that so long as the Jews are in unbelief and rebellion against the Christ, that long these curses will be upon them and their land.

This will explain many unsuccessful attempts in the past to rebuild Jerusalem and restore Palestine. Under the Roman emperor Hadrian, from 131-135 A. D., Jerusalem was rebuilt as a fortified place to keep the Jews in check. At this they rebelled and a fearful war ensued almost equal in horror to that under Vespasian and Titus, and once more the holy city was laid in ruins. The emperor also forbade the Jews to approach it on pain of death, and a temple to Jupiter was erected on Mount Moriah. Even the name Jerusalem was supplanted by *Ælia Capitolina* by which it was known till Constantine restored the old name.

In 362 A. D. the emperor Julian, as a matter of policy to gain the favor of the Jews and at the same time to discredit the prophecies concerning its desolation, for he apostatized from the Christian faith, permitted the Jews to rebuild the temple, and he himself expended vast sums of money for this purpose, but the undertaking had to be abandoned. The Roman historian Ammi-

anus Marcellinus says that balls of fire burst from the subterranean vaults which had been opened, destroyed the unfinished work, and frightened the workmen away. Why did not the work go on? The only explanation is the words of the prophets and of Christ.

From the close of the eleventh to the close of the thirteenth centuries the crusaders undertook the conquest of the holy land, especially Jerusalem, for the purpose of recovering the Holy Sepulchre from the Mohammedans. But these efforts were in the end a terrible failure, costing vast fortunes and thousands of human lives. Let it be remembered that in these crusades all the power of Europe was employed, but it was not strong enough to make void the word of God.

The Christians from Constantine on tried to restore Jerusalem by building churches in it. Though they were in a measure successful, yet in the end the city came under the control of the Turks where it remained until the "World War." It is still in the hands of the Gentiles.

Conclusion

Certain facts of these prophecies present themselves for special consideration:

1. The relation of nature to religion and morals. Our conception of the universe is that it is ruled in righteousness by its righteous Author. By following righteousness men are, therefore, cooperating with the Author of the universe and the fundamental law by which it is governed. Since righteousness is the end and law is the method of operation, it follows that everything in the world, nature included, is made to contribute to that end. Hence, we have seen the land of the Jews abundantly blessed of Jehovah so long as they honored Him and His law, but now we see the same land under a curse because of disobedience and moral pollution by its early inhabitants. This is illustrated and proved on a larger scale by the condition of the whole earth. When our first parents transgressed God's law,

Eden lost its beauty and the earth its fertility. The face of the ground was marred by thorns and thistles, and now "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain" (Rom. 8:22). The only conclusion that can be drawn is that nature itself is affected by religious defection and immorality.

2. The miracle in prophecy and fulfillment. What more conclusive proof of the divine origin of the Scriptures could possibly be given than these prophecies and their fulfillment? In them we have seen a suspension of national prosperity and the production of the land. A definite outline of the future history of the land of Israel was given which has to the present consumed about thirty-five centuries of time for its accomplishment, and still the program is unfinished. The whole period of its prophetic history reaches from Moses to the Millennium. In the meantime it should be devoured by strangers, became a thorny wilderness, be overrun by wild beasts, lose its original fruitfulness, its highways wasted, its cities destroyed, its general appearance affect the beholder with amazement, and finally to be recovered from this desolation. Its past, present, and future history is an irrefutable demonstration of the truth of the Bible. In the face of this evidence where is the man who would explain away all these predictions as mere human ingenuity, and could make men believe him? It should appear to the most unskilled in reasoning that man unaided by the Spirit of God could not lay his hand upon the future history of Palestine and say it shall be thus and so, and have it fulfilled to the letter.

3. The relation of Palestine to the divine purpose. In the providence of God this land was selected as the stage for the drama of human redemption. Because of a journey by faith it became Abraham's possession and the home of Israel. Here were enacted the mighty deeds of the Son of God—His public ministry, His atoning

death, His victorious resurrection. From Jerusalem was first preached remission of sins in the name of Christ, the sound of which shall yet be heard by all nations. Once more this land will be the home of Israel, for Jehovah "will assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:12). "And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be plucked out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God" (Amos 9:15). Then its ruined "cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded" (Ezek. 36:10).

CHAPTER X

THE NATIONS OF ANTIQUITY

The nations of the ancient world became the subjects of prophecy because of their relation to the chosen people. The location of the Hebrews in Canaan was not accidental. The divine purpose was that here they should be a constant witness for Jehovah in the midst of a world of idolatry. To this end their father Abraham was called out of idolatrous Chaldea. In Egypt Israel showed Pharaoh and all the Egyptians who Jehovah was (Ex. 5:2; 7:5). By Israel's miraculous deliverance from the land of bondage and the crossing of the Jordan Jehovah was made known to the Canaanites and other nations (Josh. 2:8-11; 5:1). By David's wars Jehovah became known as "the God of hosts (armies) who gave victory to David whithersoever he went" (2 Sam. 5:10; 8:1-14). Solomon's fame "concerning the name of Jehovah" was spread abroad among the nations, so that the queen of Sheba was moved to come and seek him who "exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom" (1 Kings 10). Thus through blessings bestowed upon them, battles won for them, and punishment visited upon them when they sinned, the Jews were a demonstration to the heathen world of the superiority of Jehovah over all other gods. Him all mankind should know, fear, and serve.

On the other hand, because the Israelites were divinely chosen, whatsoever was done against them by any of the heathen nations Jehovah considered as an affront to Himself and punishment was certain. The prophet was employed to foretell the impending destruction which was nothing short of national ruin and extinction. The conquest of the people, the desolation of their land and cities, and in some cases the foe by whom this should be accomplished, was announced in startling details and

in language most impressive—all of which has been fulfilled with astonishing precision. The case becomes the more wonderful when we know that these disasters were threatened at a time when the nations were enjoying great prosperity and luxury. From the human viewpoint the things predicted appear utterly unthinkable, but the testimony of history in each case compels belief in every honest mind. In this chapter we shall see demonstrated again and again the often overlooked truth concerning the nations of the world; namely, that Jehovah has “determined their appointed seasons,” and that “He removeth kings, and setteth up kings” in order to carry forward His plan of the ages (Acts 17:26; Dan. 2:21).

I. Ammon

The Ammonites were descendants of Ben-Ami, son of Lot by his younger daughter (Gen. 19:38). Their land extended from the Arnon to the Jabbok east of the Jordan (Num. 21:13). On account of their inhospitable and hostile conduct toward Israel, they were prohibited from entering “into the assembly of Jehovah forever” (Deut. 23:3, 4). Several other counts are recorded against them which constitute the moral ground for their utter destruction. They oppressed Israel in the time of the Judges (Judg. 3:12, 13). Their king Nahash imposed a barbarous condition of peace in the time of Saul (1 Sam. 11:1, 2). They cruelly treated the women of Gilead (Amos 1:13). And they shouted for joy when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem (Ezek. 25:3).

1. Their land should be devastated by “the children of the East.” “I will deliver thee to the children of the East for a possession, and they shall set their encampments in thee, and make their dwellings in thee; they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk” (Ezek. 25:4). About five years after the fall of Jerusalem, they were conquered and enslaved by Nebuchadnezzar. When he left Babylon for his wars in the West, he was in

doubt which to attack first, Rabbah the metropolis of the Ammonites, or Jerusalem. By means of divination he decided to move against Jerusalem first (Ezek. 21:21, 22). Later "he made an expedition against Coelosyria, and when he had possessed himself of it, he made war against the Ammonites" and subdued them (Josephus Ant. X. 9. 7). After the Babylonians the Arabs brought about the desolation of the land. They were properly "the children of the East" who have camped there for centuries and eaten its fruit. The modern condition of the land is reported by Seetzen in these words, "The far greater part of the country is uninhabited, being abandoned to the wandering Arabs, and the towns and villages are in a state of total ruin" (Seetzen's Travels, p. 34).

2. Their chief city should become a desolation. "I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the children of Ammon a couching place for flocks" (Ezek. 25:5). This has been fulfilled to the letter. Lord Claude Hamilton states that while he was "traversing the ruins of the city, the number of goats and sheep which were driven in among them, was exceedingly amazing, however remarkable as fulfilling the prophecies" (Keith, Evidence of Prophecy, p. 269). Lord Lindsay says, "Bones and skulls of camels were mouldering in the area of the theatre, and in the vaulted galleries of this immense structure" (Lord Lindsay's Travels, Vol. II. p. 117). Mr. George Robinson, who is also an eye witness testifies that "The space intervening between the river and the western hills is entirely covered with the remains of private buildings, now only used as stables for camels and sheep" (The Pulpit Commentary, Ezek. 25).

3. As a distinct people they should cease to exist. "Thou shalt be no more remembered; I will cause thee to perish out of the countries; Ammon may not be remembered among nations" (Ezek. 21:32; 25:7, 10). In the second century A. D., Justin Martyr speaks of them,

but after that they disappear from history and now nobody knows any thing of them.

4. Their restoration. 'I will bring back the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith Jehovah' (Jer. 49:6). This will come to pass when the Jews shall be converted to their Messiah (Isa. 11:11-14). The prophet says that "the Lord will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people" who shall then engage in a spiritual conquest of their ancient enemies, "and the children of Ammon shall obey them." The old enmity against God's people will then be supplanted by the spirit of Christ. Even the land of the Ammonites shall belong to the Jews. Ammon was located on the original grant to Abraham. This land belonged to the chosen people at the first and once more they shall possess it (Zeph. 2:9).

II. Moab

The Moabites descended from Moab, the son of Lot with his older daughter (Gen. 19:37). They were located south of the river Arnon and east of the Dead Sea (Num. 21:13). The Scriptures assign several reasons for their destruction. Their attitude toward Israel was one of perpetual enmity. They refused hospitality and hired Balaam to curse them (Judg. 11:17; Num. 23:3, 4). After settlement in Canaan, Jehovah's people were continually annoyed by them. In the time of the Judges they oppressed Israel (Judg. 3:12-14). Saul had to fight them (1 Sam. 14:47), and so did David (2 Sam. 8:2). They joined the Ammonites in war against Judah (2 Chr. 20), and the bands of them invaded the land for the purpose of destroying the crops (2 King 13:20). After the Jews had returned from captivity in Babylon, Sanballat of Horonaim took a chief part in hindering the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:19; 4:1; etc.). In character they were sensual and diabolical. When Jeremiah pronounced their doom (ch. 48), he named the following causes: Trust in material wealth (7); self-indulgent

ease (11); boastfulness (14); trust in their god Chemosh and defiance of Jehovah (13, 26, 42).

1. The cities should be destroyed and forsaken. "The destroyer shall come upon every city and no city shall escape; her cities shall become a desolation, without any to dwell therein" (Jer. 48:8, 9). Several of these are named whose ruins still remain to confirm the inspiration of the prophet. Nebo, Kirathaim, Misgab, Heshbon, Madmen, Horonaim, Luhith, Dibon, Aroer, Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath, Beth-diblathaim, Beth-gamul, Beth-meon, Kirioth, Bozra, Kir-he-res, Jazer, Elealeh, Jahaz, Zoar, Eg-lath-she-lish-i-yah, Nimrim—all of which have been "put to shame and broken down, and become a desolation." So complete is their destruction that the traveler finds only scattered fragments of ruined buildings, torn up foundations, and broken columns. Burckhardt in his *Travels* enumerates about fifty cities, not one of which is used as a dwelling-place by man. This is all the more impressive when we know of the former fertility of the land, its great population, and its number of fortified cities. Here was assurance of permanence, so far as man could see, but the prophet said, "No city shall escape," and today the beholder is convinced of the truthfulness of the announcement and overwhelmed by the reality of its fulfillment.

2. Cultivation of the soil should cease. "The valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed; upon the summer fruits and upon the vintage the destroyer is fallen. And gladness and joy is taken away from the fruitful field" (Jer. 48:8, 32, 33. cp. Isa. 16:8-10). The destruction of the land has been accomplished chiefly by the Arabs and the Turks who have made it a field of contest for its possession, the former generally being the victors. Even among the Arabs there has been war between the tribes which has prevented regular cultivation of the soil, and now the valleys and plains serve as pasture for their herds. The desolation is complete. "The

extensive plains, where they are not partially covered with wood, present a barren aspect, which is only relieved at intervals by a few clusters of wild fig-trees. Nowhere on earth is there such a melancholy example of the fatal effects of tyranny, rapacity, and misrule, as here exhibited. Fields, vineyards, pastures, villages, cities, all alike deserted" (Keith, *Evidence of Prophecy*, p. 289; Porter's *Damascus*. Vol 2, p. 187).

3. The remnant of the people shall dwell among the rocks. "O ye inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock" (Jer. 48:28). Isaiah said, "the remnant shall be very small and of no account" (16:14). Because of the destructive character of the wandering Bedouins who systematically overrun the country for the purpose of spoiling its inhabitants, few people live there; and these, for the sake of protection, make their homes in the rocks. This is unintentionally confirmed by Volney, who remarks that "the wretched peasants live in perpetual dread of losing the fruit of their labors; and no sooner have they gathered in their harvest, than they hasten to secrete it in private places, and retire among the rocks which border on the Dead Sea" (Volney's *Travels*, Vol. II. p. 344). A few miles from Heshbon are many caverns in the cliffs which serve as places of abode. Seetzen reported many families living in these caverns and he speaks of them as "the inhabitants of the rocks" (Seetzen's *Travels*, p. 26). Porter says that "the few inhabitants that remain behind the barrier of rocks and mountains drag out a miserable existence" (Porter's *Damascus*, Vol. II. p. 187). Such is the prophecy and its fulfillment, and it is left with the reader to conclude whether this is a guess by a mortal "who knows not what a day may bring forth," or whether it is the utterance of Him who knows "the end from the beginning."

4. The restoration. "Yet I will bring back the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith Jehovah" (Jer.

48:47). This looks forward to the gospel age when the Messiah shall bless "all the families of the earth." Then Moab, as well as the other ancient nations, shall have the judgment of sin lifted because of return to the one God and His undefiled religion. It seems that the work of restoration shall be largely committed to the Jews who, when converted, shall have much to do with evangelization of the world. Of Ammon and Moab Jehovah has said that "the remnant of my people shall inherit them" (Zeph. 2:9). And through Isaiah He made known to His people that they "shall build the old waste places; thou shalt rise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in" (58:12). Since the other parts of the prophecy concerning Moab have been fulfilled, we have every reason to believe that this also shall become a fact during the universal reign of Christ.

III. Edom

Edom is used collectively for the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, son of Isaac (Gen. 36:1, 9). Their land, called Seir, "rugged," was located south of Moab, bordered on the east by the Arabian desert, on the south by the land of Midian, and on the west by a ravine running northward from the eastern arm of the Red Sea to the Dead Sea.

The cause of their destruction was their enmity against the Jews. "For violence done to thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever" (Obad. 10). It appears that this grudge began when Jacob defrauded Esau of the parental blessing (Gen. 27:1-29) and it lasted till the time of Herod the Great who was an Edomite and who became king of the Jews. At the time of the Exodus, Edom refused Israel passage through the land (Num. 20:14-21). They were Israel's enemies in the time of Saul (1 Sam. 14:47), and David (2 Sam. 8:13, 14). After the division of the kingdom they were tributary to Judah, but the old enmity

was smouldering and they had to be subdued again and again. When Jerusalem was taken, they made common cause with the enemies against the Jews (Ezek. 35:15; Obad. 11) and urged the destruction of the city saying, "Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps. 137:7).

1. The land should become "a desolate wilderness" (Joel 3:19). On this point the graphic language of Isaiah falls upon the mind with astonishing effect. "Jehovah hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. And the streams of Edom shall be turned to pitch, and the dust thereof unto brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever. But the pelican and porcupine shall possess it; and the owl and the raven shall dwell therein: and he will stretch over it the line of confusion, and the plummet of emptiness" (34:8-11).

Although the country was rough and rocky, the soil was rich. Originally, the terraced hillsides were bright with vegetation and between the rocky clefts were valleys of fruitful fields and vineyards. The blessing upon Esau (Gen. 27:39, 40) was fulfilled in this land "of the fatness of the earth, and the dew of heaven." This is pointed out in the condition proposed by Moses when he asked that Israel might pass through the land, for he said, "we will not pass through field or through vineyard" (Num. 20:17). The completeness of its desolation is also a fact of history. Like Sodom and Gomorrah, Edom was to be visited with a destruction of fire and brimstone (Gen. 19:24; Jer. 49:18). The character of the land is in agreement with the words of the prophet, for it contains extinct craters, streams of lava, and bituminous formation. Malachi, who wrote three hundred years after Isaiah had predicted its destruction, says,

"Esau I hated, and made his mountain a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness" (1:3). The devastation of the land had at that time been accomplished, in part. In the seventh century A. D. its ruin was completed by the Mohammedan Arabs, and now for more than a thousand years it has been a spectacle of noxious weeds, thorns, wild beasts, venomous reptiles, and ravenous birds. This condition is attested by the modern traveler. Burckhardt in his *Travels*, p. 442, says, "A few trees grow among the sandhills, but the depth of sand precludes all vegetation and herbage." Delitzsch declares that "It swarms with snakes, and the desolate heights and barren table-lands are only inhabited by wild crows and eagles, and great flocks of birds." It is an immense expanse of sandy waste, entirely covered with black flints.

2. The cities should be wasted and uninhabited. "I will lay thy cities waste, thy cities shall not be inhabited (Ezek. 35:4, 9). And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and thistles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation of jackals, a court for ostriches. And the wild beasts of the desert shall meet with the wolves, and the wild goat shall cry to its fellows; yea, the night monster shall settle there, and shall find her a place of rest. There shall the dart-snake make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shade; yea, there shall the kites be gathered, everyone with her mate" (Isa. 34:13-15).

The undesigned testimony by the skeptic Volney to the fulfilment of this prediction is particularly convincing. He says, 'There are to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites (Dead Sea) within three days' journey, upwards thirty ruined towns absolutely deserted. Several of them have large edifices, with columns that may have belonged to ancient temples, or at least to Greek churches. The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them on account

of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm" (Travels, Vol. II, p. 344). Burckhardt, who visited the country in 1812, describes "the ruins of a large town, of which nothing remains but broken walls and heaps of stones; the ruins of several villages in its vicinity; the extensive ruins of Gherandel, Arindela, an ancient town of Palestine Tertia" (Travels, p. 442). Wherever the traveler goes, desolation and confusion meet his eyes. Not one of these ancient cities with their wonderful wealth, architecture and teeming population remains. In their places thistles, prickly plants and nettles grow. Instead of housing humans, their ruins have for ages been the shelter and hiding-places of wild animals of the desert as the prophet said they should be.

Space forbids further observation of the general desolation of the cities. However, the prophet pays particular attention to a stronghold among the rocks. "O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 49:16). This was the capital city, called in Hebrew, Sela; in Greek, Petra; in Arabic, Hagar; the meaning in all three languages being "the rock." It was entered through a gorge, in some places twelve hundred feet deep, which narrowed until a man could touch with outstretched arms the two walls of perpendicular rock. This causeway led to an oval place over a mile long and about three-quarters of a mile wide. All around this open space the wonderful City of Rocks was hewn out of the steep sides of the many-colored sandstone heights. The grandeur of its sculptured living quarters, temples, and tombs is beyond adequate description. In this seemingly impregnable fortress lived first the Edomites, and after them the Nabataeans, an Arab race, who held up the caravan traffic between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. In this hidden city they stored their plunder. Here they could defy their

enemies and feel safe. Many are the explorers who tried to enter, but who never brought back a report. In truth Edom could be called, "The border of wickedness" (Mal. 1:4) because of violence and robbery. But Jehovah had said, "I will bring thee down"; and so thorough has been His work that for centuries the capital of Edom has been given over to the bats and the owls, and the wild beasts of the desert.

3. The waste places should be rebuilt, but destroyed again. 'Whereas Edom saith, We are beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places; thus saith Jehovah of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down' (Mal. 1:4). This too has become a fact of history. The Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus, recording two invasions of Edom by Demetrius, a commander under Antigonus who was one of the generals succeeding Alexander the Great, speaks of the country as a desert and of the inhabitants as living without houses (Diod. Sic. XIX.). This was about 300 B. C. But Josephus, who wrote in the last half of the first century A. D. gives the names of thirteen cities then existing which proves that Edom did rebuild (Joseph. Ant. XIV. 1, 4.). Evidence of decay and restoration may also be found in the several types of architecture disclosed by the ruins of the capital city Petra. There is seen the influence of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, and Christianity, which indicates so many efforts at reconstruction. This city served Christianity as the metropolitan see of the third Palestine, the last named bishop being Theodorous, who was present at the Council of Jerusalem in 536. After that time Petra disappeared completely from history until it was rediscovered in 1812 by Burckhardt. All the other rebuilt cities present now a spectacle of complete ruin which testifies to the certainty and accuracy of the word of God.

4. Wisdom and understanding should perish. "Of Edom. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Is wisdom no more

in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?" (Jer. 49:7). We have evidence of Edom being a great seat of learning in the days of its glory. The speeches by Eliphaz the Temenite, recorded in the book of Job, show much knowledge. Obadiah (8) speaks of "the wise men" of Edom. Solomon's wisdom excelled that of "the children of the East" (1 Kings 4:30). Sir Isaac Newton says, "The Egyptians, having learned the skill of the Edomites, began now to observe the position of the stars, and the length of the solar year, for enabling them to know the position of the stars at any time, and sail by them at all times without sight of the shore; and thus gave the beginning to astronomy and navigation. It seems that letters, and astronomy, and the trade of carpenters, were invented by the merchants of the Red Sea, and that they were propagated from Arabia Petra into Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Asia Minor, and Europe" (Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms, pp. 208, 212). But wisdom is no more in Teman, nor understanding in the Mount of Esau. The only book studied by the Arabs, the present inhabitants of the land, is the Koran. They are an ignorant, superstitious, and fanatical people. Their minds are as barren of practical knowledge as the land they inhabit is of vegetation. From fear of losing their freedom, they avoid contact with the civilized world. Their intellectual horizon is circumscribed by the burning sands and the caves of the desert whither none can follow them. Thus Jehovah has made "Esau bare," stripped him not only of material prosperity but of mental acumen, dignity, and power. It is but another mighty emphasis upon the precision and certainty of the prophetic word.

Other facts announced by the prophets concerning Edom we leave for the interested student to pursue. Such mental exercise will strengthen the faith of the believer and produce faith in the unbeliever. "Seek ye out the book of Jehovah, and read" (Isa. 34:16). Here is

an invitation to compare the destruction of the land with the word of Jehovah. The desolation you see is according to what you read in the predictions. With reference to the consequences of sin but one reaction is possible: "Our God is a consuming fire."

IV. Philistia

The Philistines were located within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:20, 45-47). Their land extended along the Mediterranean Sea from the Valley of Sorek on the north to the river of Egypt (Wady el-Arish) on the south. It contained five chief cities—Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, Ekron—where lived the political governors, known as "the five lords of the Philistines." The Philistines were not exterminated during Joshua's campaign (Josh. 13:1-3), and later they became thorns in the sides of God's people (Judg. 2:3).

The primary reason given for their destruction is their inimical attitude toward the chosen people. Against them they exhibited revenge and perpetual enmity (Ezek. 25:15, 16). This animosity no doubt arose because the tribe of Judah subjugated Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron (Judg. 1:18), although the conquest was not permanent. They helped Edom carry Judah captive (Amos 1:6; 2 Chr. 28:17, 18). In alliance with Tyre and Sidon they had sold the children of Judah to the Grecians who were great traffickers in slaves (Joel 3:4-6). Jehovah informed them that they who touch His people touch Him, "and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I lay My vengeance upon them" (Ezek. 25:17).

1. The land should be desolated. "The word of Jehovah is against you, O Canaan, the land of the Philistines; I will destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be pastures, with cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks" (Zeph. 2:5, 6). This country, once so highly cultivated and productive, should be wasted so as to be serviceable only as a mere sheep pas-

ture, and its palaces should be replaced by the shepherds' dug-outs. This sea-coast, which was a harbor for ships and a residence for merchants, should be entirely depopulated of its former inhabitants: "there shall be no inhabitant."

All this came to pass. The Jews began the destruction of the Philistines when they were defeated by David (2 Sam. 8:1; 21:15-22). Uzziah inflicted a decisive blow on them and destroyed Gath, Ashdod, and Jabneh (2 Chr. 26:6). Their land suffered greatly in the struggle between Egypt and Assyria. Herodotus tells us that Psammetichus I of Egypt took Ashdod after a siege of twenty-nine years (II. 157); that in the latter part of his reign Scythian hordes plundered the temple of Venus at Ashkelon (I. 105); that his successor, Pharaoh Necho, on his return from the battle of Megiddo, captured Gaza (II. 159); and that when the Persian monarch Cambyses invaded Egypt about 625 B. C., the whole coast belonged to the king of the Arabians. At that time the Philistines practically disappear from history as a distinct nation, and as a race they are now unknown among the peoples of the world.

When Volney visited Philistia he was particularly impressed by its desolation. He says, "In the plain between Ramla and Gaza we meet with a number of villages, badly built of dried mud, and which, like the inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness . . . In winter they and their cattle may be said to live together, the part of the dwelling allotted to themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts. Except the environs of these villages, all the rest of the country is a desert, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it" (Volney's Travels, Vol. II. pp. 335, 336).

2. The cities should be destroyed.

Of the five leading cities of Philistia, four are given particular attention by the prophets. The reason Gaza

is omitted is that at this time the Jews had possession of it through conquest by David (I Chr. 18:1).

(1) Gaza. "Baldness is come upon Gaza" (Jer. 47:5); "Gaza shall be forsaken" (Zeph. 2:4). This city, the name of which means strong, was remarkable for its importance as the key to the country. But the prophet said it should be stripped of all its strength and glory. This has been thoroughly accomplished. Reference has already been made to destruction by Assyria and Egypt. After a siege of two months it was taken by Alexander the Great. (Jos. Ant. XI. 8, 4). Later Jonathan Maccabaeus destroyed its suburbs, and at a still later period Simon Maccabaeus after a great struggle took the city (1 Macc. 11:67; 13:43). Alexander Jannaeus besieged it for a whole year and utterly overthrew it (Jos. Ant. XIII. 13, 3).

That ancient Gaza has been completely forsaken is attested by those who have visited the place. The modern village by the same name must not be confused with the ancient city. It is not located on the ancient site, but is farther inland. J. W. McGarvey, who visited the place in 1879, says, "Between the city and the seashore are evident remains of an ancient city, especially on the slope toward the shore" (Lands of the Bible, p. 266). This is corroborated by Alexander Keith who visited the place twice and gave it careful examination on this point. He was particularly impressed by its utter ruin and wrote, "The writer looked in vain for any fragment of ruin one cubic foot in size, for any shrub, or plant, or blade of grass to relieve or interrupt the perfect baldness that has come upon Gaza" (Evidence of Prophecy, p. 230). Volney's undesigned testimony is to the same effect. He says, "The ruins of white marble sometimes found at Gaza proves that it was formerly the abode of luxury and opulence. It has shared in the general destruction; and notwithstanding its proud title of the

capital of Palestine, it is now no more than a defenseless village" (Travels, Vol. II. p. 340).

(2) Ashkelon. "Ashkelon is brought to naught" (Jer. 47:5; "Ashkelon shall not be inhabited" (Zech. 9:5). This city was a port on the Mediterranean coast between Gaza and Jamnia. The land where it was located was remarkable for its fertility. The city itself was celebrated for its wealth of aromatic plants, cypresses, figs, olives, wine, pomegranates and bees. It was strongly fortified, having a thick wall built on the top of a rocky ridge that formed a semi-circle about forty feet high. Here the inhabitants dwelt in luxury and security, worshipping the Syrian Venus under the form of a fish with a woman's head, and troubling Israel with their wars. But Jehovah declared, "Ashkelon is cut off," and now its apostate worshipers and bloody warriors are gone.

Its destruction has extended over centuries but is now complete. After the time of Alexander the Great it was subjugated by Syria and Egypt. It suffered much in the Jewish wars with the Romans. In the seventh century A. D. it fell into the hands of the Mohammedans. During the Crusades its fortifications were dismantled and rebuilt several times. Finally it was totally destroyed by Sultan Bibars in 1270 A. D., and to this day the word of Jehovah stands true—"Ashkelon shall not be inhabited." It is empty and desolate. Not a human habitation is found on the ancient site. The Arabs even will not dwell within the shelter of its walls for fear of Genii, but live outside in a small village of mud huts exposed to the fury of winds and drifting sand.

(3) Ashdod. "They shall drive out Ashdod at noon-day" (Zeph. 2:4); "And a bastard (stranger) shall dwell in Ashdod" (Zech. 9:6). This town was located about nine miles northeast of Ashkelon and is called in the New Testament Azotus (Acts 8:40). It is two miles distant from the sea, the intervening space being a desert of moving sand. Ashdod was the seat where Dagon was

worshiped and where the ark of Jehovah triumphed over the idol (1 Sam. 5:1-4). It was a place of great fortified strength, being located on the military route between Syria and Egypt. Its military strength may be estimated from the fact that it withstood a siege of twenty-nine years before it was taken by Psammetichus, king of Egypt, about 630 B. C. The prophet had said that its inhabitants should be driven out "at noonday," indicating that the city would be so weak and defenseless that there would be no need of surprising it at night. This was accomplished by the Maccabees (1 Macc. V. 68; X. 77-84; XI. 4).

(4) Ekron. "Ekron shall be rooted up" (Zeph. 2:4); "Ekron, for her expectation shall be put to shame" (Zech. 9:5). Of the five principal cities belonging to the lords of the Philistines, Ekron was the farthest north (Josh. 13:3). In this city was a noted sanctuary of Baal-zebub, the god of the fly (2 Kings 1:16). From thence the ark of Jehovah was sent back to Israel upon a cart drawn by two milch kine, and the Philistines gave "glory to the God of Israel" by sending with it a trespass-offering (1 Sam. 5:10; 6:1-8). Concerning it also the words of the prophets have come true. It was "put to shame" when Alexander the Great conquered Syria. The Ekronites no doubt expected the strongly fortified Tyre to stop the advance of the conqueror, but it fell before him and they found themselves without defense. So completely has it been "rooted up" that no visible relics of it can be found. Its site is now believed to be occupied by Akir, a Moslem village built of unburnt brick. Dr. Keith remarks that "the very want of any information respecting which, and the absence of its name from several modern maps of Palestine, while the sites of other ruined cities are marked, are really the best confirmation of the truth of the prophecy that could possibly be given" (Evidence of Prophecy, p. 228).

V. Tyre

The Hebrew name of this Phœnician city means a rock, which agrees well with the site of old Tyre on the rocky peninsula and the new Tyre on the rocky island. Its earliest recorded history is found in 2 Sam. 5:11 and 1 King 5, 7 in connection with its king, Hiram, who aided David in building his house and Solomon in building his temple. Tyre was the great centre of wealth, vice, and commerce of Phœnicia. Ezekiel speaks of it as "the renowned city," "the merchant of the peoples unto many isles" (26:17; 27:3); and Isaiah calls it "the heart of nations" (23:3). No better statement of its far reaching commerce can be found than that by the prophet (Ezek. 27:12-25). But in spite of her strength, wealth, and glory she had to go down in ruins according to the word of Jehovah.

1. Her sins. She accorded ill treatment to God's people (Joel 3:5-8; Amos 1:9). She exulted over the fall of Jerusalem (Ezek. 26:2). Its king arrogated to himself divine honor (Ezek. 28:2-7). She was proud (Isa. 23:9), and full of violence and iniquity (Ezek. 28:16, 18). From this it will be seen that Tyre had corrupted herself beyond recovery, and that the judgment visited upon her was a just retribution.

2. Her judgment.

(1) To be accomplished by many nations. "Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth its waves to come up" (Ezek. 26:3). The first nation to come up against Tyre was the Babylonian. Nebuchadnezzar was named by the prophet as the one who should do this (Ezek. 26:7-9). He beseiged Tyre on the continent, known as Old Tyre, for thirteen years, at the end of which it was completely destroyed (Joseph. Ant. IX. 14. 2; Against Apion I. sec. 20, 21). Pridaux says that Nebuchadnezzar "utterly destroyed the place; that is, the city which was on the continent" (Prid. Connections,

Part I. Book II. Anno 573. Nebuchadnezzar). When Old Tyre was taken, the inhabitants were scattered to the islands of the sea, as Isaiah said they would be (23:6, 12). He also said that "Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years" and then be restored (23:15-18) The seventy years ended when Babylon was taken by Cyrus the Great, and then the nations who had served Babylon were set free. Phœnicia included (see Jer. 25:11, 12). The New Tyre on an island a half mile from shore where the Old Tyre had stood, rose to great power and glory. This, too, the prophet said should be destroyed, for the prediction by Ezekiel was not exhausted by the devastation of Old Tyre.

The next nation to fulfill this prophecy was the Greek under Alexander the Great. The strength of Tyre's position was considered impregnable. It relied upon its deep surrounding waters and a wall a hundred and fifty feet high which extended to the water's edge. But Alexander took the ruins of Old Tyre and built a mole from the mainland to the island. In so doing he fulfilled the prediction in Ezek. 26:12. Then aided by ships, New Tyre was taken 332 B. C., after a siege of seven months.

After the Greeks, Tyre fell successively into the hands of the Romans, the Saracens, and the Turks.

(2) Fire should devour it. "I brought forth a fire from the midst of thee; it hath devoured thee" (Ezek. 28:18); "she shall be devoured with fire" (Zech. 9:4). Provoked by the desperate resistance of its inhabitants, having taken the town, "he burnt it down to the ground, and destroyed or enslaved all the inhabitants: eight thousand he slew in the sackage of the town, and two thousand of those he took prisoners he caused to be crucified. Those who were before sent to Carthage escaped this ruin, and a great number were saved by the Sidonians, and secretly conveyed away in their ships, on the taking of the place; all the rest, to the number of

thirty thousand, were sold for slaves" (Prid. Connections, An. 332. Darius 4.).

(3) Is should become a bare rock for the spreading of nets. "I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her a bare rock. She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea" (Ezek. 26:4, 5). Tyre, although completely demolished by Alexander, soon revived and was a populous flourishing city at the beginning of the Christian era. But once more there must be a visible argument for the truthfulness of God's word. In the fourteenth century the place was visited by Sir John Maundeville, who testified in these words: "But this once famous Tyre is now no other than a heap of ruins. On the north side it has an old Turkish castle, besides which there is nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc., there being nothing so much as an entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches that harbor in vaults and subsist on fishing" (Art. Tyre, Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Encyclopedia, McClintock and Strong). In 1838 when Dr. Robinson was there he wrote, "I continued to walk along the shore of the peninsula, part of which is now unoccupied except as 'a place to spread nets upon' . . . Tyre has indeed become like 'the top of a rock.'" (Bibl. Res. III, 395).

(4) It should never be rebuilt. "Thou shalt be built no more" (Ezek. 26:14). This prediction may puzzle the reader because of the presence on the ancient site of a modern city. When J. W. McGarvey visited the place in 1879, it contained 5000 inhabitants. But it should be remembered that the old city serves as a foundation for the modern town. McGarvey says of the unoccupied portion, "The buried foundations of walls in this part of the island constitute a rock quarry, and we saw men engaged in procuring building-stones from excavations 15 or 20 feet deep. The only building whose construction dates as far back as the Crusades, any considerable por-

tion of which is still erect, is an immense church, one end of which stands almost entire, while the other walls are a few feet above the ground" (Lands of the Bible, p. 529). Ancient Tyre never was rebuilt after its final destruction, and the prediction has been literally fulfilled.

VI. Nineveh

Nineveh was the metropolis of Assyria, and since the capital city is frequently put for the whole empire, the ruin of one involves that of the other. Concerning its origin we read in Gen. 10:11 that Asshur, a Semite, went out from Babylon, settled by Hamites, (Gen. 10:8-10) and founded Nineveh. This apparently improbable statement could have been a fact. After the flood the three sons of Noah settled in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, consequently intermingled. That disagreement could arise between the Semites and Hamites is also possible. This would lead to separation of the two races.

Not only was Nineveh very ancient, but it was also very great. In the book of Jonah it is styled "that great city" (1:2); "an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (3:3), that is in circumference. In it were "more than six score thousand persons who could not discern between their right hand and their left hand" (4:11). This probably refers to children, who according to usual calculation would number one fifth of the population. Accordingly, the total population would be over six hundred thousand. The Bible statements concerning the greatness of the city are confirmed by heathen authors. Strabo says it was greater than Babylon, which was 385 stadia in circuit. (I. 16. p. 1071). And Diodorus Siculus asserts that the circumference of Nineveh was 480 stadia (no less than 60 miles), and was surrounded by a wall 100 feet high, broad enough for three chariots to drive abreast, and defended by 1500 towers, each 200 feet high. "Nobody afterwards built such a city, either

as to greatness of compass, or as to the magnificence of the walls." (Diod. Sic. Book II. Chap. 3).

Reasons for its overthrow were moral corruption (Nah. 1:14), on account of which Jonah was commissioned to go and "cry against it" (1:1), and enmity against God's people. The Assyrians were formidable enemies of Israel and Judah. Pul invaded Israel, but was bought off with a thousand talents of silver (2 Kings 15:19, 20). Tiglath-pileser took several cities and carried the inhabitants captive (2 Kings 15:29). Shalmanezer took Samaria and carried the ten tribes captive (2 Kings 17:5, 6). Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah and exacted silver and gold (2 Kings 18:10-15). He started against Jerusalem but was miraculously defeated (2 Kings 19:35-37). For these reasons Nineveh was made the subject of prophecy, the predictions being found in the books of Nahum and Zephaniah. The manner in which the city should be taken and the means to be employed were fully stated by the prophets.

1. It should take place while the Assyrians were drunk. "For entangled like thorns, and drunken as with their drink, they are consumed utterly as dry stubble" (Nah. 1:10). The historian Diodorus Siculus relates that the king of Assyria with his army were celebrating former victories, and while drunk the enemies came upon them, destroyed a great part of them, and drove the rest into the city from which they never ventured again. (Diod. Sic. II. 26, pp. 81, 84). The attacking forces were the Medes and the Babylonians, who took the city in the third year of the siege, 607 or 6 B. C. (Monuments and the Old Testament, Ira M. Price, pp. 205-6).

2. It should be destroyed by fire and water. "The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace is dissolved;" "fire hath devoured thy bars;" "There the fires shall devour thee" (Nah. 2:6; 3:13, 15). Diodorus Siculus says "there was an old prophecy that Nineveh should not be taken till the river became an enemy to the city;

and in the third year of the siege the river, being swollen with continued rains, overflowed part of the city, and broke down the wall for twenty stadia; then the king, thinking that the oracle was fulfilled and the river become an enemy to the city, built a large funeral pile in the palace, and collecting together all his wealth and his concubines and eunuchs, burned himself and the palace with them all: and the enemy entered the breach that the water had made, and took the city" (Diod. Sic. II, 27).

3. Much spoil should be taken. "Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is no end of the store, the glory of all goodly furniture" (Nah. 2:9). Enormous amount of gold and silver were saved from the fire and carried to Ecbatana by the conquerors (Diod. Sic. II. p. 87). Only one or two fragments of the precious metals were found in the ruins.

4. It should be utterly destroyed and become a waste place. "She is empty, and void, and waste" (Nah. 2:10). "And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the wilderness. And herds shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the pelican and the porcupine shall lodge in the capitals thereof" (Zeph. 2:13, 14). Jehovah had said, "I will make thy grave" (Nah. 1:14) and for over twenty centuries the tomb was unknown. But in 1845 Mr. A. H. Layard, the English archaeologist began digging in the Mesopotamian valley, and a few years later was rewarded by uncovering in Ninevah the immense palace of Sennacherib, king of Assyria (705-681 B. C.). After him George Smith, an officer in the British Museum, discovered a library of 30,000 tablets and cylinders, which had belonged to Assurbanipal (668-626 B. C.), the Assyrian king who preceded Asshur-emid-ilin, in whose reign Ninevah fell. These and other discoveries make the iden-

tification of the city certain. It was located on the east side of the Tigris, opposite the present town of Mosul.

It should be "dry like the wilderness." This prediction has been vindicated, for the site and surrounding country except after periodic rains, is a parched yellow waste. Herds of domestic animals and wild beasts should lodge there. That, too, is fulfilled. Mr. Layard said that, "Flocks of sheep and herds of camels may be seen seeking scanty pasture among the mounds. From the unwholesome swamp from within the ruins of Khorsabad, and from the reedy banks of the little streams that flow by Kuyunjik and Nimrud, may be heard the croak of the cormorant and the bittern, and in the deserted halls the hyena, the wolf, the fox, and the jackal now lie down." (Nin. and Bab. p. 357). Such was the end of that vile city which for so many years troubled God's people and finally led them captive. Such is the evidence which it offers to the truthfulness of God's word. The facts of history and the exhumed remains of the city come upon us with such force as to thoroughly convince of the providence of God.

VII. Babylon

Babylon was founded by Nimrod before Asshur built Nineveh (Gen. 10:8-10). The later Babylonian empire began after the fall of Nineveh when Assyria was divided between Cyaxares, the Mede, and Nabopolassar, the Assyrian conspirator. He got the city of Babylon and the whole Euphrates valley to the south-west, while Cyaxares took all the country north and north-west.

The strength of Babylon is given by the ancient historian and referred to in the Scriptures. It was four-square with the river Euphrates running through the midst. Herodotus, who was himself at Babylon, tells us the wall was 480 furlongs (about 60 miles) in circuit, 350 feet high, 87 feet thick, and 250 towers on the top of it. It had 100 gates, 25 on each side, and was surrounded on the outside with a vast ditch filled with

water. In the Bible it is spoken of as the "great Babylon" (Dan. 4:30); "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride" (Isa. 13:19); "the praise of the whole earth" (Jer. 51:41). No one would think that such a city was in danger of destruction. She vaunted her security in these words: "I shall be mistress forever; I am, and there is none else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children" (Isa. 47:7, 8). But the prophet looked more than one hundred and fifty years into the future and announced her fall with such assurance as if it had already taken place. "Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground" (Isa. 21:9). The prophecies dealing with its overthrow are recorded in Isa. 13, 23, 47; Jer. 50, 51.

The reasons for her destruction are given as (a) Pride in her own strength (Isa. 47:7-11; Jer. 50:29, 30); (b) Unmerciful in the destruction of God's people (Isa. 47:6; Jer. 50:17, 18; 51:33-37); (c) Covetous and wicked (Jer. 51:13, 25).

1. Its destroyers should be the Medes and the Persians. "Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them; Go up, O Elam (the province of Persia); besiege, O Media" (Isa. 13:17; 21:2). This is in agreement with the writing on the wall in Belshazzar's palace in that fateful night when the city was taken. The announcement read: "thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 5:28). Secular history also confirms this. In 558 B. C., Cyrus the Great founded the Medo-Persian Empire. At once he entered upon a career of conquest which brought all of Western Asia under his control, Babylon being left for the last stroke.

2. Cyrus should be the commander. "Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him." (Isa. 45:1-4). Here we are informed that Jehovah named Cyrus almost two hundred years before he was born, raised

him up for the accomplishment of a certain piece of work with reference to the divine plan of the ages, promised him great wealth, and bound himself to hold the conqueror's right hand in order to sustain him and direct his movements all of which was fulfilled with astonishing precision.

Cyrus himself was imbued with the idea that he was divinely selected and assisted. On his clay cylinder, which describes the capture of Babylon, these words are found: "Through all the lands he (Merodach) searched, he saw him, and he sought the righteous prince, after his own heart, whom he took by the hand. Cyrus, king of Aushan, he called by name; to the sovereignty over the whole he appointed him." (The Monuments and the Old Testament, Ira M. Price, p. 227). It is altogether probable that Cyrus had read the prophecy of Isaiah concerning himself. See also Isa. 44:28. This is in harmony with his proclamation concerning the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of their temple (Ezra 1:1-4).

We now see how Providence through one man, himself not a worshiper of Jehovah, humiliated proud Babylon, delivered the Jews after a bondage of seventy years, and thus fulfilled Jer. 25:11; 29:10. Let those who do not believe that God raises up certain men at certain times for the accomplishment of His purpose explain the prophecies concerning Cyrus and give the true interpretation of the historical facts of his career.

3. The Babylonians should be too terrified and cowardly to fight. "The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they remain in their strongholds; their might hath failed; they are become as women" (Jer. 51:30). In the spring of 538 B. C., Cyrus crossed the Tigris and appeared before the city. In the battle which ensued Nabonadius, the Babylonian king, was defeated. The greater part of his army sought refuge inside the walls of the capital commanded by his son Belshazzar,

while Nabonadius himself fled for safety to Borsippa, a city a short distance to the south-west. The Babylonians never recovered their courage to face the enemy again. Cyrus challenged their king to single combat and thus decide the battle, but in vain. (Xen. Cyrop. V. 3, p. 290). "Their might had failed."

4. The river should be dried up before the city would be taken. 'I will dry up the rivers' (Isa. 44:27); "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain dry" (Jer. 50:38; 51:36). This prediction was fulfilled in a singular manner. Cyrus had a great trench dug around the walls of the city, ostensibly for blockade. Then he stationed one part of his army where the river entered, and another part where it left the city. One night when the Babylonians were revelling in drunkenness and all manner of debauchery, he suddenly diverted the waters of the Euphrates from their channel into this trench, and when the river bed was dry his soldiers passed through it into the city (Herod. I, 191; Xen. Cyrop. VII, 7).

5. The city should be taken during a feast while the inhabitants were drunk. "When they are heated, I will make their feast, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith Jehovah; And I will make drunk her princes and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake, saith the King, whose name is Jehovah of hosts (Jer. 51:39, 57).

Cyrus had timed his attack with the great annual festival of the Babylonians to their gods, when the entire population would be engaged in drinking and revelry. At that time young Belshazzar gave reign to every passion and made a great banquet in his palace to which a thousand nobles were invited (Dan. 5). The rest of the people were occupied in feasting, drinking, and dancing. (See Herod. B. I. c. 191; Xen. Cyrop., B. VII. c. 5, 1). "In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's

hand and wrote upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace" the doom of the king and his kingdom. While this drunken orgy was going on in the night the Medes and Persians turned the river out of its channel, entered the dried up river-bed, passed under the gates at the city walls without being observed, and began the terrible massacre. In that night the lives of the Babylonian princes, governors, and mighty men ended in "a perpetual sleep," and the word of Jehovah stood fast. Thus in one night fell this most strongly defended city on earth, and with it ended the Babylonian empire after it had continued for eighty-seven years.

6. The city should become a desolation without inhabitants. "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for jackals, an astonishment, and a hissing, without inhabitant" (Jer. 51:37. cp. Isa. 13:19-22).

Babylon has "become heaps." All who have visited it bear testimony to its desolation. It presents a series of enormous mounds which consist of the crumbled ruins of its ancient buildings. C. J. Rich, who saw the place in 1811, says, "The whole face of the country is covered with vestiges of buildings in some places consisting of brick walls surprisingly fresh, in others, merely a vast succession of mounds of rubbish" (Memoirs, p. 2). Capt. Robert Mignan, who did some exploratory work there in 1826-28, writes: "Irregular hillocks and mounds, formed over masses of ruins, present at every step memorials of the past" (Travels, Vol. II. p. 116).

It is a dwelling place for wild beasts. In 1574 a German traveler by the name of Rauwolf passed that way. In his report he says, "The village of Elugo now lieth on the place where formerly Old Babylon, the metropolis of Chaldea, was situated. Behind it, and pretty near to it, did stand the tower of Babylon. It is still to be seen, and is half a league in diameter; but so ruinous, so low, and so full of venomous creatures, which lodge in holes made by them in the rubbish, that no one durst approach

nearer to it than within half a league, except during two months in the winter, when these animals never stir out of their holes." (Newton on the Prophecies, pp. 141, 142). Sir R. R. Porter relates that the caverns in the ruins are now "the refuge of jackals and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrances are strewn with the bones of sheep and goats; and the loathsome smell that issues from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den" (Travels, Vol. II. p. 342). For this reason, and also because of superstitious dread of evil spirits, the Arabians do not "pitch tent there," neither do "shepherds make their flocks to lie down there." Such is the triumph of the word of God over "Chaldeans' pride," and such is the literal fulfillment of the divine predictions.

VIII. Egypt

Egypt is one of the most famous of ancient countries, and the one most closely identified with Bible history, except Palestine. Its name in Hebrew is Mizraim, called also in the Bible "the land of Ham" (Ps. 105:23), because it was settled by Mizraim, the son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). Here Abraham and his seed became sojourners. It was celebrated for its greatly advanced civilization. "Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Only Solomon's wisdom excelled "all the wisdom of Egypt" (1 Kings 4:30). This land became a refuge for our Lord and His parents from the wrath of Herod. No country has produced such monuments as the pyramids, and so long a catalogue of kings. Its unsurpassed fertility, attributable to the overflow of the Nile, made it the "granary" of the world. Its minerals, such as limestone, sandstone, porphyry, alabaster, granite and syenite, furnished an inexhaustible supply of building material. Among the metals were gold, silver, copper, iron and lead. Yet in spite of its greatness and glory, it sank into oblivion under "the burden of the word of Jehovah" because of its sins.

Reasons for its destruction are given as (a) Pride of power (Ezek. 30:6, 18; 29:3, 9). (b) Forgetful of Jehovah (Ezek. 30:8, 13, 19, 26). (c) Enslavers of God's people (Ex. 1). (d) Rendered poor assistance to Judah (Ezek. 29:6, 7. cp. 17:13-20; Jer. 37). (e) Plundered Jerusalem (1 Kings 14:25, 26). (f) Was exceedingly wicked and oppressive (Ezek. 31:71; 32:2; Jer. 46:12).

The principal prophecies relating to the overthrow of Egypt are found in Isa. 19; Jer. 43:8-13; 44:30; 46; Ezek. 29-32.

1. Nebuchadnezzar should begin its destruction. Jehovah gave it to him as a reward for taking Tyre (Ezek. 29:17-20). While besieging that city, its wealth was removed to Tyre on the island a half a mile from shore and Nebuchadnezzar was left without loot. But as soon as Tyre had fallen, he invaded Egypt and ravaged the whole land "from Migdol to Syene" (Ezek. 30:6, marg.). Pharaoh Hophra was slain, and the Jews who had fled there when Gedaliah, the Babylonian governor of Judea, had been murdered were destroyed, all of which had been foretold by Jeremiah (44:24-30). After Nebuchadnezzar had appointed Amasis as his deputy over Egypt, he returned to Babylon with rich spoils. This invasion is corroborated by Josephus who also says that Nebuchadnezzar after returning to Babylon from Egypt, "adorned the temple of Belus, and the rest of the temples, in a magnificent manner, with the spoils he had taken in war" (Ant. X. 11, 1). According to Ezekiel 29:11, 12, the desolation of Egypt should continue forty years. This also was fulfilled, for Egypt was oppressed until Babylon was taken by Cyrus about forty years later.

2. The gods of Egypt should be destroyed. "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause the images to cease from Memphis" (Ezek. 30:13). This was accomplished first by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians (Jer. 43:12, 13), next by Cambyses and the Persians, After Cambyses had succeeded his father Cyrus, he made war

upon Egypt. His first move was upon Pelusium, a strongly fortified town and the key to the entrance of Egypt. This place he took by placing before his soldiers a great number of cats, dogs, sheep and other animals held sacred by the Egyptians. By this means he protected his army and at the same time the gods of Egypt were shown up to be utterly helpless and untrustworthy. He slew Apis, the sacred ox, demolished the idols, burned the temples, chastised the priests and laughed at the people for worshiping such deities. The next place of like fate was Memphis, whereupon all Egypt submitted to Persia (Pridaux's Connection, An. 528. 2. CambySES).

3. Egypt should be "the basest of kingdoms" (Ezek. 29:14, 15). This has been most severely fulfilled. The Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Turks have been her masters and extortioners. Her debasement is best stated by Volney. "In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveler meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intense troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders" (Travels, Vol. I. pp. 190, 198). Such is the literal fulfillment of this prophecy according to the testimony of an unbeliever in the revealed religion who wrote as an eye-witness two thousand four hundred years after the predictions was uttered.

4. There should "be no more a prince from the land of Egypt" (Ezek. 30:13). When one considers its long line of kings of the past, this is a most remarkable prediction. According to Manetho, an Egyptian priest who lived in the third century before Christ, there were no

less than thirty dynasties and hundreds of kings from the founding of the monarchy by Menes to the final Persian conquest in 346 B. C. After that Egypt has been subject to the Greeks, the Romans, the Saracens, the Mamelukes, the Turks. At present the Egyptians have a ruler of their own, but he is subject to Great Britain. It is utterly beyond human conjecture to say that time would come when this great, wealthy and powerful kingdom would forever become subject to strangers. It is now twenty-five hundred years since Ezekiel delivered this prophecy, and the student is awe-struck by the precision of its fulfillment.

5. The river of Egypt and its tributaries should fail (Isa. 19:5-8). On account of geological changes, the ancient branches of the Nile have been turned from their courses and a large portion of the once fertile land of Egypt has been reduced to sandy waste. Its modern condition is testified by Alexander Keith in the following words: "The streams of the Nile are now circumscribed within narrow limits to what formerly they were. On the western side of Egypt, as seen in Heath's Plan of Egypt, an 'ancient bed of the river Nile, now dry, and called by the natives Bellomah,' is distant eighty miles from the nearest branch of that river. The intermediate space, of greater length than breadth, is marked as immense sandy plains;" and a long canal which partly intersected it, is now "dry, except at the time of inundation." Along the sea-coast the land is level and destitute of trees. And on the eastern side of Egypt, "the Pelusian branch of the Nile is choked up" (Evidence of Prophecy, p. 502).

Egypt was "the Gift of the Nile." The prophet said its "waters shall fail," and they have. This would affect vegetation. "Reeds and flags shall wither away," and now there is no sign of reeds, flags, or other aquatic plants along the Nile. "The sown fields shall become dry," a fact testified to by the absence of the former grain-fields for which this land was famous. The work-

ers in flax and cotton has been "confounded," because these commodities are not produced in quantities as they once were. "The fishers lament and mourn," because the canals, brooks, and ponds in which the fish were plentiful have "dried up." In this telling way has the withering hand of Jehovah been laid upon this once fertile and productive land. The present effort, put forth under British direction, to reclaim the desert along the Nile by means of irrigation, does not nullify the prophecy. The fact remains that the land has been in the condition the prophet said it would be.

6. Its cities should become desolate (Ezek. 30:14-19). Again we hear the testimony of Alexander Keith, the eye-witness. "Its two great cities, Cairo and Alexandria, are bordered by the desert. And with the exception of Rosetta and Damietta, and a few miserable villages, not a single town is to be met with, in traversing Lower Egypt from Alexandria to El Arish, or from one extremity to the other. Thebes, once famed for its hundred gates, may be called, from the magnificence of its remains, the metropolis of ruins. Memphis has perished. Heliopolis has now a single erect obelisk to tell that the mounds around it were once the 'city of the sun.' " Keith quotes Wilkinson to the effect that "At Babastus, now Tel Basta, the Pi-beseth of Scripture, are lofty mounds, and some remains of the ancient city of Pasht. Many other mounds in various parts of the Delta mark the sites of ancient towns." Continuing his own observations, he says, "The author, in hastily passing over Egypt, heard of ruins in various directions, and passed over those of Zoan" (Evidence of Prophecy, p. 505). Of the vast number of cities in Egypt when the prophet wrote, not one is now to be seen. The mind is simply overwhelmed by the miraculous demonstration of the inspired word and the transitoriness of all human glory. Here is visible the hand of God, and anyone must be blind not to see it.

7. Its restoration. (Isa. 19:18-25). The prophet closes his prediction of the overthrow of Egypt by foretelling the conversion of the Egyptians to the God of Israel.

"The language of Canaan" shall be spoken there (18). This is the sacred language of revelation. The "five cities" referred to is probably a case where the definite is used for the indefinite and means many. cp. 17:6; 30:17; Lev. 26:8.

There shall be "an altar to Jehovah in the midst of the land." (19-22). The true God shall in the future be worshipped in this land of gods many.

Egypt, Assyria, and the Jews shall finally worship together (23-25). This common faith and worship will remove the enmity between them and they shall be blessed of Jehovah.

All this shall be brought about by "a savior, and a defender" whom Jehovah shall send and who shall deliver them from their oppressors. Who should this be? Some hold that he was Alexander the Great who delivered Egypt from Persian oppression. It is pointed out that it was further fulfilled in the Ptolemies while Egypt was under Greek rule, for then the Jews had much freedom, being even allowed to build a temple like unto that in Jerusalem during the reign of Philometer and his queen Cleopatra. There may be some truth in this interpretation, but it is not exhaustive. The Savior of all men is the Christ through the instrumentality of His gospel, the language of the heavenly Canaan. In Acts 8:26-40 we have an account of how Jehovah was made "known to Egypt," and we learn from subsequent history that many churches of Christ were established in Africa. The further fulfillment of this prediction is yet in the future.

Conclusion

From this study of the nations of antiquity in prophecy and fulfillment certain facts are outstanding from which some conclusions may be drawn.

1. Causes of their overthrow. In every case opposition to and oppression of the chosen people are assigned as one of the reasons for their destruction. By this we are to understand that Jehovah ever watches over His people with a jealous eye, and anyone who insults and injures them, does the same to Him. For this reason, "Jehovah hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion" (Isa. 34:8).

Moreover, there is laid upon men the demand of reverence for Jehovah. Those who trust in their own gods, or wisdom, or wealth, or power and to that extent ignore the Creator of heaven and earth, will sooner or later be taught the lesson that God rules and that men have to do with Him. Pride, because of wealth and power, always ends in disaster. When Solomon said, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18), he spoke not only in the light of human experience, but also with a mind taught of God.

Finally, every nation which has lost its usefulness through moral corruption will ultimately be removed. This has always been, and we may presume, always will be so. For this reason the seven nations of Canaan were destroyed during Joshua's conquest. For the same reason all the great nations of the past have perished, and a modern proof is found in some of the European nations which were reconstructed at the time of the "World War."

2. The principle of retributive justice. As nations, they are held responsible; and the principle of conduct in God's moral government is, that righteousness brings its reward and sin its own punishment. "I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double" (Jer. 16:18). "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). The modern idea is that sin punishes and destroys itself, hence God is not in the case. Such is not the teaching of the Bible, for it speaks of God as sending the punishment. Proof for this is found in the Flood, the

burning of the Cities of the plain, the Captivity of the Jews, and the destruction of the different nations prophesied against.

Furthermore, there is the necessity of retribution in time. Nations, like individuals, have character of their own. As nations, they have no future world. In the final judgment men will be dealt with, not as groups, but as individuals (2 Cor. 5:10). That makes it necessary for Jehovah to mete out judgment to the nations in this world.

3. The Bible the word of God. In the study of these nations we face facts recorded in history, and visible now, which connect directly with the predictive word. The question before us which must be answered is: What is the source of the Bible? Is it from God? or from men? How account for these facts which have taken place according to exact details foretold by the prophet, in some cases many hundred years before they transpired, if he did not speak by the Spirit of Jehovah? The challenge of Jehovah in respect to this matter in Isa. 45:21 is still unanswered by the skeptic.

4. The divine plan of the ages. Once more in this course of study we are made to see that Jehovah has a definite objective with reference to which everything in the universe is operating. That objective is nothing less than salvation from sin through the Messiah and overthrow of all evil. To that end Jehovah is His own historian, and through prophecy He has written beforehand the history of the world. Moreover, He controls human actions in relation to His own announced purpose. Here is the key to the meaning of all history. By retrospection we now know that whenever a nation became useless, or hindered the divine purpose, it was removed. Prospectively, we are assured of the final triumph of God, good and truth in the world.

5. Restoration. The desolation of the lands of these nations was on account of their sins; the restoration will

be on account of their righteousness. The earth is made to sympathize with its inhabitants in sorrow and joy, and it lies within the power of humanity to determine which it shall be. Sin has brought thorns, thistles and universal desolation; righteousness shall cause the desert to "rejoice and blossom as the rose" (Isa. 35:1, 2).

CHAPTER XI

THE MESSIAH

The Messianic element has already appeared in our previous studies. The protevangelium in (Gen. 3:15) is the focal point from which all prophetic doctrines proceed. Through this lens in the divine telescope we have seen God's plan develop along two distinct lines: first, that of the chosen people; second, that of the heathen nations. Now we bring into focus the third line of Old Testament prophecy, that which deals with the personal Messiah. Because of the large number of passages involved, all that is attempted here is to present in outline form, without comment, the main points which bear upon the history of the Redeemer.

I. His Person

1. The seed of the woman. Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:18; Gal. 4:4.
2. The seed of Abraham. Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:16.
3. The seed of Isaac. Gen. 21:12; Lk. 3:34; Heb. 11:18.
4. Of the tribe of Judah. Gen. 49:10; Heb. 7:14.
5. Of the family of David. Ps. 89:3, 4; 132:11; Acts 13:22, 23; Rom. 1:3.
6. Born of a Virgin. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18; Lk. 2:7.
7. Called Immanuel. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22, 23.
8. Son of God. Ps. 2:7; Lk. 1:35; Mk. 14:61, 62; Jno. 9:35, 37.

II. His Character

1. Beloved of God. Isa. 42:1; Matt. 12:18. cp. 3:17.
2. Noiseless and unobtrusive. Isa. 42:2; Matt. 12:19. See 12:14-16.
3. Compassionate. Isa. 40:11; 42:3; Matt. 12:20; cp. 9:36.
4. Sinless. Isa. 53:9; Jno. 8:46; Heb. 7:26; I Pet. 2:22.
5. Just. Zech. 9:9; Jno. 8:1-7; Heb. 1:8, 9.
6. Zealous for God's house. Ps. 69:9; Jno. 2:17.

7. Bore reproach. Isa. 53:7; Matt. 26:63; 27:12-14.
8. Prayed for His murderers. Isa. 53:12; Lk. 23:34.
9. Meek. Zech. 9:9; Isa. 42:1, 2.

III. His Country

1. Born in Bethlehem Judah. Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:1; Lk. 2:4-6.

2. To visit Galilee. Isa. 9:1, 2; Matt. 4:14-16. "Gloom, anguish, darkness" came upon this land when its inhabitants were carried captive. All this would be removed when Christ, "the light of the world," should visit this land. This he did, making three tours of Galilee.

IV. His Office

1. Anointed by the Holy Spirit. Isa. 61:1; Ps. 45:7; Matt. 3:16, 17; Acts 10:38.

2. A prophet like unto Moses. Deut. 18:15-18; Acts 3:20-22.

3. A priest like Melchizedek. Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6 and Aaron, Heb. 7:26-28. Type is prophetic.

4. A king like David. Ps. 89:3, 4; Lk. 1:32.

V. His Career

1. Introduced by a harbinger. Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; 4:5; Matt. 3:1-3; Lk. 1:17.

2. A deliverer of the people. Isa. 61:1-3; Lk. 4:16-21, 23.

3. Taught by the use of parables. Ps. 78:2; Matt. 13:34, 35.

4. Wrought miracles. Isa. 35:5, 6; Lk. 7:18-23.

5. Rejected by his brethren. Ps. 69:8; Isa. 53:3; Jno. 1:11; 7:5.

6. Hated by the Jews without a cause. Ps. 35:19; 69:4; Jno. 15:24, 25.

7. Rejected by the rulers. Ps. 118:22; Jno. 7:48; Matt. 21:42.

8. Disbelieved by the people. Isa. 53:1; Jno. 12:38-40.

9. A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Isa. 8:14; Rom. 9:32; I Pet. 2:8.

10. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5-9.

11. Betrayed by one of the twelve. Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Jno. 13:18-21.

12. Forsaken by His disciples. Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31-56.

13. Sold for thirty pieces of silver. Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:15.

14. The betrayal money to buy the potter's field. Zech. 11:13; Matt. 27:7, 5.

15. Smitten on the cheek. Micah. 5:1; Matt. 27:30.

16. His suffering intense. Ps. 22:14, 15; Lk. 22:42-44.

17. Scourged and spit upon. Ps. 35:15; Isa. 50:6; Mk. 14:65; Jno. 19:1.

18. His visage greatly marred. Isa. 52:14; 53:3; Jno. 19:1-5.

19. His death an offering for sin. Isa. 53:4-6, 10; Dan. 9:26; Matt. 20:28; 26:28.

20. Jewish and Gentile rulers put Him to death. Ps. 2:1-4; Lk. 23:12; Acts 4:27, 28.

21. Crucified. Ps. 22:16; Jno. 19:18; 20:25.

22. Numbered among thieves. Isa. 53:12; Mk. 15:27.

23. Gave him gall and vinegar to drink. Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34.

24. Mocked. Ps. 22:7, 8; 35:15-21; Matt. 27:39-44.

25. Suffered alone. Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46.

26. They parted His garments and cast lots for His vesture. Ps. 22:18; Matt. 27:35.

27. Became a curse for us and bore our reproach. Isa. 53:8; Gal. 3:13; Ps. 69:9; Rom. 15:3.

28. They pierced His side. Zech. 12:10; Jno. 19:34-37.

29. Not one of His bones broken. Ex. 12:46; Jno. 19:33-36.

30. Buried in a rich man's tomb. Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60.

31. His flesh did not see corruption. Ps. 16:8-10; Lk. 24:6, 31, 34; Acts. 2:31.

32. Ascended into Heaven. Ps. 68:18; Lk. 24:51; Acts 1:9.

VI. His Kingdom

1. To be set up at Jerusalem. Isa. 2:2, 3; Mic. 4:2; Lk. 24:46-49; Acts 2:1-40.

2. Universal in scope. Ps. 2:6-8; Matt. 28:18, 19; Phil. 2:9-11.

3. Eternal in duration. Dan. 2:44; Lk. 1:33.

4. Righteous in character. Isa. 9:7; Ps. 45:6, 7; Jno. 5:30; Rev. 19:11.

Conclusion

The evidential value of the Messianic prophecies must appear to the average man or woman. These prophecies are plain, minute, explicit and have been fulfilled to the very letter. To the candid mind they come with the irresistible confirmatory force concerning the fundamentals of the faith.

1. They confirm the unity of the Scriptures. "To Him bear all the prophets witness" (Acts 10:43). Although many of them were separated by time and space so as to make consultation impossible, still all of them spoke of Him in perfect accord in all their utterances. Not one contradiction can be found. As has been seen, all their different lines of prediction terminate in the Messiah. Anybody can say, "I am the Christ," but no human being can arrange beforehand all the details we have noticed concerning the Messiah and have them come true. But one conclusion is possible: "God spoke unto the fathers in the prophets" (Heb. 1:1). This only can account for that wonderful unity pervading the Hebrew Scriptures.

2. They present evidence of the deity of Jesus. In many cases their fulfillment could be accomplished only by a supernatural person. The superhuman excellence of His moral character has not been reached or even approached by any man before Him or after Him, the unbelievers themselves being judges. His sinless life, His

miracle-working power, His absolute justice, His kindness and compassion, His peaceable disposition, his more than human forbearance were all foretold by the prophets and fulfilled in the Anointed. After a careful study of the gospels, this singular character led Goethe so say, "Let mental culture continually increase, and the natural sciences grow, broadening and deepening in their progress, and the human mind expand, as it will; beyond the elevation and moral grandeur which gleam and shine forth in the gospel, men will never advance."

3. They furnish argument for the divine origin of Christianity. In the New Testament Christ is presented as the founder of Christianity. He would "build His church" and come "in His kingdom" (Matt. 16:18, 28). This kingdom is also called "the kingdom of God" (Mk. 9:1) because He planned it. We have already found that the prophecies demonstrate the deity of Christ and looked forward to one who should sit forever on David's throne. Since Christ was the founder of the Christian institution and was seated on David's throne according to promise (Acts 2:29-36), it follows that Christianity is of divine origin.

4. They demonstrate the mercy and love of God. In the milleniums which have rolled by between the first and second Adam, the voice of the infinite Father was heard from out of that mysterious spirit land which lies so close to this material realm. It was the voice of boundless compassion because of a lost race. Early it spoke of the Goel, the Kinsman—Redeemer (Job. 19:25); the Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4); the Prophet and Deliverer like Moses (Deut. 18:18; Acts 7:35, 37). Through later prophets the theme of this voice was "The Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 5:24); "The Lord Our Righteousness" (Jer. 23:6); "The Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2), whose name should be "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Upon Him Jehovah would lay

“the iniquity of us all, and with His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5, 6). The consummation of all this is recorded in the four gospels. And the person of Christ, who answered to every prediction, is an irrefutable demonstration of the fact that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.”

CHAPTER XII

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM AND THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD

The Book of Daniel

We have seen the relation of the Hebrew people to the heathen nations of the past, and have found that those nations were destroyed primarily because of their moral corruption and inimical attitude toward the chosen people. On this account they were a positive hindrance to the ongoing of Jehovah's plan of redemption, hence their removal became a necessity. In the book of Daniel we shall see the relation of Messiah's kingdom to the future kingdoms of the world. They, too, must be disposed of because of their immorality and hateful attitude toward the Messiah's reign. The divine plan calls for the final triumph of Christ's Kingdom over every foe, political and spiritual. The spirit of the four universal empires, symbolized by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, shall disappear as the chaff before the wind on the threshing floor (2:35), and to the Son of Man shall be given "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him" (7:13, 14).

I. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream. Dan. 2:1-49.

1. The Occasion 1-30. In the second year of his reign, while lying on his bed, he was wondering what the future might have in store for him and his kingdom. With this thought on his mind he went to sleep (v. 29. cp. Eccl. 5:3).

2. The Dream 31-35. In his sleep he saw "a great image" of a man made of different metals. This was in harmony with the times, for ancient coins represented cities and people by figures of men and women. He also saw a stone, "cut out of the mountain without hands," which smote the image and broke it into pieces, and

then "became a great mountain which filled the whole earth."

3. The Interpretation 36-45.

(1) The head of gold. This symbolized the Babylonian empire, founded by Nabopolassar in 625 B. C., and overthrown by Cyrus the Great in 538 B. C. This empire, on account of its great wealth and power, was fitly represented by "the head of gold." For the same reason Isaiah calls it "the golden city" (14:4).

The particular service of this kingdom to the plan of God was in the captivity of the Hebrews. The Babylonians were providentially used to chastise apostate Israel, according to the words of Moses and the prophets (Deut. 28:36; Jer. 25:11).

(2) The breast and arms of silver. This part of the image represented the Medo-Persian empire, which was the next universal government following the Babylonian. It lasted from 538 B. C. to 330 B. C., when it was overthrown by Alexander the Great. The prophet said it should be "inferior" to the Babylonian kingdom, and such it was in wealth, morality, unity, and energy. Pridaux says that the kings of Persia were "the worst race of men that ever governed an empire" (Connection, Part I. B. 2, Anno 559. Neriglissar 1.). It was inferior also in dominion, for "neither Cyrus nor any of his successors ever carried their arms into Africa or Spain so far as Nebuchadnezzar is reported to have done" (Newton on the Prophecies, p. 187).

The important event in the plan of God with which this empire is connected was the proclamation by Cyrus the Great to the Jews which allowed them to return from Babylon and rebuild the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4).

(3) The belly and thighs of brass. This part of the image prefigured the Grecian empire, founded by Alexander the Great in 330 B. C. and lasted till 146 B. C. when Carthage was destroyed by Scipio and the last of

the Greek power was broken. It, like the preceeding three, should "bear rule over all the earth." Although Alexander did not really conquer the whole world, he nevertheless had considerable dominion in Europe, Asia, and Africa, the parts which constituted the then known world. He also commanded that he should be king of all the world (Justin, Book 12, ch. 16, sec. 9). And Diodorus Siculus tell of ambassadors coming from almost all the world to recognize his authority (Book 17, ch. 113). The metal of this part of the image also serves as a distinguishing mark of the Greeks. Their armor was of brass, and the common name for them was, "Brazen-coated Greeks." At the death of Alexander the empire was divided among his four generals, thus weakness and decay soon began which hastened its dissolution.

The relation of the Grecian empire to the divine plan of the ages is of special importance. First, the attitude of the Greeks towards the Jews was that of beneficent toleration. After Alexander had founded Alexandria in Egypt, he had it settled by many thousand Jewish emigrants. Similar Jewish communities were planted throughout Egypt and along the coast of North Africa. They also had their colonies all over Asia Minor and Syria. They were permitted to live under their own laws, regulate their own affairs, and were even granted the equality of Greek citizenship (See Joseph. Against Apion, B. II. sec. 4). In this way the chosen people were preserved under Grecian rule and God's purpose was carried forward through them. In the second place, the Greeks gave to the world a universal language. By this means the messengers of the cross could go anywhere and preach the gospel. Finally, Ptolmey Philadelphus, ruler over Egypt, had the Old Testament Scriptures translated into Greek about 280 B. C. This disseminated God's word throughout the world and its prophecies produced in the people an expectation of the coming Messiah. This translation was later used by the apostles

of Christ and apostolic men in their preaching, and from it they quoted in their letters to the churches.

(4) The legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay. This marks the Roman empire, for it succeeded the Grecian in order of time, and lasted from 146 to 476 A. D., when the western portion fell, the eastern part continuing till 1453. Certain characteristics of this kingdom are given. Like the three preceding ones, it should be universal in power. As iron "breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things," so this iron kingdom shall "break in pieces and crush" everything in its way. It is well known to the student of history that Rome in its conquests ruthlessly crushed everything before it, and finally became a universal empire. In the next place, "it shall be a divided kingdom," symbolized by the iron and the clay. Although Rome conquered and subdued all the nations of the earth, in spirit they were not Romans. They only waited for an opportunity to break away, and in the fifth century A. D., Rome fell by the attack of the barbarians who were symbolized by the clay.

The service of the Romans to the divine purpose claims our attention. The relation of this people to the Jews was expressed in "a league of friendship" (Jos. Ant., XIII. 9, 2). Josephus also speaks of "the privileges which the great (Julius) Caesar bestowed upon the Jews" (Against Apion, B. II. sec. 4). At times the Jews were rebellious and Rome was compelled to lay her strong hand upon them, but as a rule they were favored for political reasons (cp. Mk. 15:15). At last, when they had definitely rejected their Messiah, he was compelled to announce their future desolation (Matt. 23:37-39). Thirty-six years later this judgment was begun to be executed by the Romans who ravaged Judea and destroyed Jerusalem. Thus once more we see how Providence made a heathen nation well disposed toward the Jews in order that they might be preserved until "the fulness of the time" relative to the long deferred pur-

pose of the ages. We also have a further illustration of God using unbelievers, without their knowledge, as executioners of His justice.

(5) The stone which became a mountain. The common view of this symbolism is that it represents the Kingdom of Christ. It is like the four preceding empires in that it was to be universal—the stone “became a great mountain and filled the whole earth” (35). It is unlike them in that it shall be set up by the God of heaven and shall never be destroyed (44).

(a) The time of its origin. It was to be set up “in the days of those kings” (44). Who are those kings? Some contend that the ten toes represent that many kingdoms in modern Europe, and that in the days of those kings Christ shall return to earth and set up His kingdom. That position is untenable for the following reasons:

First, verse 41 speaks of but one kingdom including the legs, feet and toes. If the legs and toes are to be considered as symbols of kingdoms, to be consistent, the same meaning should be given to the thighs and arms of the image. And it might with equal propriety be extended to fingers, eyes, ears, nose and mouth. The purpose of the prophet is to represent kingdoms, not by limbs and organs of the image, but by the different kinds of metal composing it. The modern prophet has created an unsurmountable difficulty on this point. He has made the two legs symbolize the Eastern and Western Roman empire, and by the ten toes he represents the ten divisions of the Western empire. He thus has ten toes on one foot!

Second, the stone is to smite the image on the feet (34). It is urged that the ten toes represent ten kingdoms which were formed out of the Roman empire, embracing the country between the Danube, the Rhine, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. But those kingdoms have passed away without having been smitten by

the stone, for according to the theorists the Kingdom of Christ has not yet been set up. That leaves this part of the prophecy without a possibility of being fulfilled.

Third, the adjective "those" in verse 44 indicates that the subject has been clearly stated. According to the context, it refers to the kings of the four universal empires, and to them only. It cannot refer to the subject matter in verse 43, for that deals with, not kings, but the material composing the fourth kingdom.

Fourth, the destructive impact of the stone was not merely upon the toes of the image. When it did strike, "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken in pieces" (35). The prophet makes it clear that four kingdoms, not ten, would be affected by the stone.

Fifth, the New Testament teaches that the Kingdom of Christ was set up in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost in 34 A. D. Before that time it was preached as "at hand" (Matt. 3:2; Mk. 1:14, 15; Lk. 10:9). On that day Jesus was announced as the King who occupied the throne of David according to promise (Acts 2:29-36). After Pentecost the Kingdom was preached as an established fact (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31). It was defined as a spiritual institution already in existence (Rom. 14:17). People in the church were addressed as having been called and translated into the Kingdom (1 Thes. 2:12; Col. 1:13). And John wrote to the seven churches of Asia that he was a partaker with them in the Kingdom (Rev. 1:9). This is agreeable to Daniel's prophecy. "The days of those kings" would be the time of the Roman kingdom, for the first three kingdoms symbolized by Nebuchadnezzar's image had passed away before 34 A. D. which marks the beginning of the Messiah's reign. But at that time the Roman kingdom was at the zenith of its power, with Tiberius Caesar on the throne. These facts prove conclusively that the Kingdom of Christ was set up on the above date. Are we yet to

look for a second setting up of the Kingdom of Christ? That cannot be, unless His present reign is to be overthrown. But against that we are assured by the words of Daniel, for he says it is "a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (44).

(b) The place of its beginning. The stone representing it was cut out of the mountain (45). Isaiah in 2:2, 3 informs us that it should be Mount Zion, another name for Jerusalem. Jesus commissioned His apostles to begin the proclamation of the gospel "From Jerusalem" (Lk. 24:47), and the second chapter of Acts tells us they did.

(c) Its source. Its origin is divine, for "the God of heaven" is its author, and it "was cut out without hands" (44, 34). In this it differs from the preceding kingdoms, which were carved out by human hands. On this account it is called "the kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of God" (Matt. 19:23; Mk. 10:25). For the same reason Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. 18:36). Its heavenly origin is further seen in that the apostles, through whom Jesus set up the kingdom on the day of Pentecost, spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

(d) Of the insignificant beginning. At first it is merely a stone. Our Lord presented the same thought in the parable of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31, 32). The facts reported in the book of Acts concerning the beginning of the church prove this point—3000, 5000, multitudes.

(e) Its effect upon human kingdoms. "It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" (44). Two things should be marked. First, as a stone it should destroy the four preceding kingdoms till no vestige of them remained (35). When the Roman was destroyed, the other three were affected because their characteristics were found in the fourth. This is made plain when we remember that though there were different metals

symbolizing four different empires, there was but one image. Therefore, all these empires were animated by the same spirit. It is the spirit of a greedy selfish godless world that would be antagonized by the kingdom of God. Second, as a mountain it should fill the whole earth. No room would be left for any other kind of government. The first of these has been fulfilled. The stone began to strike the image upon the feet when the apostles went into every part of the Roman empire, preaching the gospel and founding churches. In 331 A. D. emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the empire. Later the barbarians, the Mohammedans and the Turks were providentially used in overthrowing the political remnant of the empire.

The second point in the prediction is yet in the future. It will be accomplished when "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. 11:15); "when He shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24).

(f) Its duration. It "shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people, it shall stand forever." In this declaration two thoughts claim special attention.

First, finality. As a universal kingdom it shall have no successor. "The sovereignty thereof shall not be left to another people." Daniel is speaking of five universal empires, and the Kingdom of Christ is the fifth and last. After it was set up, men have tried to build universal empires, but have failed. Among them have been Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XVI, Napoleon, and Kaiser Wilhelm, but without success. The only adequate explanation of this singular fact is that God had said it should never be accomplished.

Second, eternity. "It shall stand forever." Human governments go down in decay and revolution, but the kingdom of Christ "cannot be shaken" (Heb. 12:28). "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (Heb. 1:8).

Earth cannot destroy it; Hades cannot overcome it (Matt. 16:18). It will continue to the end of the world and the final judgment. On this point the testimony of Paul is conclusive (I Cor. 15:24-28).

II. Daniel's Vision. 7:1-28.

Daniel was transported in vision to the Mediterranean sea, known in Scripture as "the great sea." In prophecy waters are symbolic of peoples in commotion (Rev. 17:15). The winds stand for men's passions which often lash the sea of humanity into a furious mob, or tremendous conflict. Out of this turmoil four beasts arise, and since they are born of such conditions, they will exhibit the characteristics of their progenitors. These beasts are explained to be kingdoms of this world, and we shall see in them the extent to which passions, appetites and desires will drive men. What was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar concerning the four universal empires, was revealed again unto Daniel with some modification. The main difference between Nebuchadnezzar's image and Daniel's beasts is this: the image represents the political history of these kingdoms, while the beasts exhibit their moral character under the idea of brute force and rapacity.

1. The Four Beasts. 2.14.

(1) A lion with eagle's wing. This beast stands for the Babylonian kingdom. Elsewhere the lion and the eagle are used as symbols of this power (Jer. 4:7; 48:40; Ezek. 17:3, 12).

The character of this kingdom is derived from the creatures of the symbolism. As a lion, it was fierce and strong; as an eagle, it was swift. The strength and cruelty of Babylon is seen in her conquests. And the rapidity with which Nebuchadnezzar conquered Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, Arabia, and other countries is fitly characterized by the eagle.

Its progress should cease. "I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked." This was done when the provinc-

es of Lydia, Media and Persia rebelled and elected a king of their own. This humbled the ruler of Babylon, stopped progress in conquest, and compelled war with Media and Persia which ended in the fall of Babylon.

This bold and ferocious beast should be humanized. It was "made to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man's heart was given to it." Two events brought this about. The first is reported in 4:28-37; the second in ch. 5. These events caused the king and people of Babylon to "know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will" (5:21).

(2) A bear with three ribs in its mouth. This beast represent Medo-Persia.

This kingdom should have bear characteristics; namely, greed, superior strength, and cruelty. These are confirmed as facts by history, for the Medo-Persian power was blood-thirsty and all-devouring. The cruelty of its kings has not been excelled, if equalled. Isaiah speaks of it (13:18), and the ancient historians have written of it "from Herodotus down to Ammianus Marcellinus, who describes them as proud, cruel, exercising the power of life and death over slaves and obscure plebians. They pull off the skins, says he, from men alive, by pieces or all together; and they have abominable laws, by which for one man's offense all the neighborhood is destroyed" (Newton on the Prophecies, p. 204).

The bear was raised up on one side ready to attack, and it had three ribs in its mouth as prey. The three ribs are thought to have been Babylon, Lydia and Egypt which were conquered by Cyrus the Great of the Persian side. Besides these, it should "devour much flesh." This indicates a vast conquest, which was begun by Cyrus and reached its climax in the great Darius.

(3) A leopard with four wings and four heads. The kingdom intended by this animal is the Grecian. The peculiarities which distinguish it are:

Leopard characteristics. These are craftiness and blood-thirstiness. He always wants blood. This fitly represents Alexander the Great, the founder of the empire. The conquests undertaken by him were for war's sake, and it is said that he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer.

Speed. The Babylonian lion had two wings, but the Grecian leopard has four. Nebuchadnezzar's conquests were rapid, but Alexander's much more so, for in twelve years he became universal ruler.

Division. The four heads denote the four divisions of this kingdom after the death of Alexander. His four great generals, after wrangle and war, divided the kingdom, and Cassander ruled over Macedon and Greece, Lysimachus over Thrace and Bithynia, Ptolmey over Egypt, and Seleucus over Syria.

(4) An unnamed beast. It is generally allowed by protestant expositors that this beast signifies the Roman empire. The aspects of this beast are indescribable. No animal can be found so terrible in appearance; so fierce, strong and destructive in character and constitution as to give this beast a suitable name. It far exceeds in appearance, rage and power all that had preceded it, hence the prophet says, "it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it." All this was true of the Roman empire. Its crushing power was exceedingly great, its conquests extended farther than those of Alexander, and its tyranny has never been equalled.

The development of this power is two-fold:

(1) The ten horns. These are explained by the angel in V. 24 to be "ten kings" or kingdoms which should arise out of this empire, at the same time, for they appear altogether on the head of the beast. The history of the Roman empire discloses the fact that after its fall in 476 A. D., it was divided into ten principalities among the barbarians who overthrew it. These divisions were: 1. The State of Rome. 2. The Exarchate

of Ravenna. 3. Lombardy. 4. The Huns. 5. The Alans. 6. The Franks. 7. The Burgundians. 8. The Goths. 9. The Britons. 10. The Saxons. These were in power at the same time. It is observed that among the different writers there is a slight variation in names of the ten kingdoms, but this is accounted for by the confusion arising from the falling of some of these kingdoms and the rising of others. But they all agree that the Roman empire was divided into ten parts.

(2) The little horn. This horn was the eleventh, for it came up among the ten and should come into power "after them" (v. 24). It should be a combination of politics and religion. Politically, it would put down three of the ten horns; religiously, it would speak words against the Most High and wear out his saints. According to history this horn is identified with the Papacy. The Romish church, when fully developed, possessed temporal and spiritual power which it exercised with vengeance until the time had expired according to the prophetic word. In the New Testament it is Paul's "man of sin" (2 Thes. 2:3-10) and John's "beast" (Rev. 13:1-18). The prophetic outline of its history is of absorbing interest.

(a) It arose out of the sea. (Dan. 7:3; Rev. 13:1). According to Daniel and John it is a beast that arose out of "the great sea," the Mediterranean. Italy borders on this sea, and the city of Rome is the capital of both the pagan and papal empires; even the Tiber on which Rome is located, is part of this sea. The sea is also a symbol of people in commotion. Rome pagan and papal arose out of such circumstances—wars and internal turmoil.

(b) It arose out of the Roman beast (Dan. 7:8; Rev. 17:3,12, 13). Daniel tells us that it came up among the ten horns, hence it arose on the territory occupied by the Roman empire. Moreover, the Roman beast made the origin possible. John represents the papacy as a lewd

woman sitting upon the scarlet colored beast of pagan Rome (cp. Rev. 12:3), and the ten horns "give their power and authority to the beast." This is confirmed by history. It is well known that the apostate Romish church had its origin in the Roman empire. Even the Romanists themselves claim that the city of Rome was providentially selected as the seat of religious authority, and that there the apostle Peter was the first to occupy the papal chair. On the other hand, papal power was supported by the empire. This had its beginning in the union of church and state under Constantine, and was fully developed in the reign of Charlemagne. It was understood that the church and the state should support each other for mutual advancement.

(c) It arose after the empire was divided (8). The ten horns were in existence when the little horn made its appearance. Paul says when the "one that restraineth (the Roman empire) be taken out of the way then shall be revealed the lawless one" (2 Thes. 2:7, 8). It is an historical fact that the emperors restrained the church in her aggressiveness for temporal power before the empire fell in 476. But when the Holy Catholic Church was formed by Charlemagne, then was the lawless one fully revealed. Under that organization the Catholic Church exercised temporal and spiritual power. This two-fold power is symbolized by John's beast out of the earth (Rev. 13:11-18), for it has two horns. In this respect it was "diverse from the former" (Dan. 7:24).

(d) It plucked up three of the ten horns (8). The prophet says it should be "three of the first horns." As shown above, these were the Exarchate of Ravenna, the Kingdom of the Lombards and the state of Rome. Through intrigue the pope got possession of them. Ravenna was given the pope by Pepin, king of the Franks, in 754, while Charlemagne gave him Lombardy and the state of Rome (See Kurtz Church History, pp. 319, 320; Neander's Church History, pp. 119-122).

(e) It had eyes of a man (8). This not only indicates that the horn was a man, but it also denotes intelligence, cunning and scheming for the purpose of promoting his own interests. John says he was "like unto a leopard" (catlike and cunning), that "he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon" (Rev. 13:2, 11). 'This lamblike appearance is deceptive, for he speaks like a dragon. John also calls this power "Mystery, Babylon the Great" (Rev. 17:5). The history of the papacy shows it to be deceptive, plotting, and always working in the dark.

(f) It had a mouth speaking great things (8, 20). The speech is explained to be "words against the Most High" (25). John says "there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies" (Rev. 13:5). And Paul speaks of him as sitting "in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thes. 2:4). His speech is heard in the pope's claims to be the representative of Christ, infallible in mind and conduct. Hence he styles himself "Universal Father," "His Holiness," "Supreme Head of the Church on Earth," "Successor of Peter," "Prince of the Apostles," "Vicar of Christ," "Lord God the Pope." He assumes power over the whole church, the angels of heaven, and the inhabitants of hades. In all things he claims to be equal to the Son of God, even in the matter of forgiving sin.

(g) Its look was more stout than its fellows. That means that the pope assumes superiority, not only over his fellow bishops, but even over emperors and kings. Gregory VII, in dealing with Henry IV, said: "I have received from God the power of binding and of loosing in heaven and in earth; and by this power I forbid Henry the government of the whole realm of Germany and Italy. I also loose all Christians from the oaths they have taken to him; and I decree that no man shall obey him as King." Henry was at Canossa, where in an outer court of the castle he was kept standing barefooted in

the snow for three successive days before he was admitted into the presence of the pope to receive absolution. The same Gregory said: "The Roman Pontiff alone can be called universal. He alone has a right to use imperial ornaments. Princes are bound to kiss his feet, and his feet only. He has a right to depose emperors, His sentence can be annulled by none, but he may annul the decrees of all." (The Preachers Homiletic Commentary, Dan. Ch. VII).

(h) It made war with the saints of the Most High. (21, 25. cp. Rev. 13:7). It is well known to the student of history that one of the prominent features of the papal church in centuries past was the persecution of saints under the name of heretics. From the time Justinian (527-565 A. D.) when Catholic priests and soldiers surrounded churches and burned them with the congregation in them, as in the case of the Montanists (Gibbon, ch. 47), down to the massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, when 2,000 Huguenots were killed in Paris and 20,000 throughout France, the Romish church has been stained by the blood of saints. Historians have estimated the number killed by her to be 50,000,000 people.

(i) It should change times and the law (25). On this account Paul calls the man of sin "the lawless one" (2 Thes. 2:8). Such is the character of the papal church. Its history is one of utter disregard of divine and human laws, when in conflict with her selfish ambitions and schemes. She has appointed fasts and feasts, granted pardons and indulgences for sins, changed modes of worship and instituted new church ordinances. The traditions of the fathers and decrees of Councils are made equal, and in some cases superior, to the word of God. In the preface to the Douay Version, the Bible used by the Catholics in this country, the following statement is found: "The Sacred Scriptures form a part of divine revelation; the other part being contained in the depository of the Church and designated as the unwritten

word of God." Thus she claims authority to legislate on divine things, which has resulted in changing at will the laws of God and man.

(j) It should be in power for a limited time (25). The "time times and half a time" of Daniel is used by John in Rev. 12:14, and is explained to mean "a thousand and two hundred and threescore days" (v. 6). According to Jewish speech, "a time" meant one annual revolution of the earth (Dan. 4:32); hence "times" would be two revolutions; and "half a time," a half year, making a total of 1260 days. In prophetic language each day stands for a year (Ezek. 4:6), consequently the papal power should continue undisturbed for 1260 years. The exact date of its beginning cannot be determined, for its growth was gradual through the first centuries of the Christian era. Even in Paul's time the mystery of iniquity had begun to work. But we do know that the Reformation by Luther was the first great blow upon the apostate church, and should mark the beginning of the end of the 1260 years.

(k) It should be gradually consumed (26). "To destroy it unto the end," connotes a constant gradual destruction. From the German Reformation to the present hour the Romish church has gradually declined. Her temporal power is still retained in part through legates to the governments of the world, but her spiritual power is fast waning. People fear not now, like they once did, her decreetals and excommunications. The judgment on the horn is revealed in verses 9-12. The Ancient of Days is Jehovah himself, for in verse 13 He is distinguished from "the Son of Man," a title of our Lord, who has been appointed judge of the world. (Acts 17:31). Daniel saw thrones placed, and books opened containing the deeds of the little horn and the fourth empire. The Roman beast which had supported the little horn was slain (476 A. D.) and its body given to the fire. As a world power the Roman empire was gone forever.

In verses 13, 14 Daniel reports his vision of the ascension, coronation and dominion of the Messiah. The coming of the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days is further explained in Acts 1:9-11; Lk. 24:50-52. Having ascended to heaven, "there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." Peter announced this fact in his sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:36).

The angel in his interpretation to Daniel of the fourth beast and the little horn, promised the triumphant kingdom of the Messiah to "the saints of the Most High" (v. 27). "Here is the end of the matter." We thus see the destruction of the Roman kingdom and the little horn. The saints who have suffered from the opposition of these powers are avenged and the Redeemer's kingdom is victorious over every foe, political and spiritual. The destruction of these two powers is given in detail in the book of Revelation. First, there is the vision of the overthrow of the Roman empire, symbolized by seven seals, the seventh containing seven trumpets (Chs. 6-11). Next, the destruction of the papacy is symbolized by seven angels who pour upon the apostate church "seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God" (Chs. 15, 16). In chapter twenty the government of the whole earth is given to "the saints of the Most High" and they reign "with Christ a thousand years."

III. The Latter Days of God's People.

Dan. 8:1-12:13.

The first seven chapters of the book of Daniel were written in the Chaldean tongue for the purpose, no doubt, of enabling the Babylonians to read the prophetic matter pertaining to them. The rest of the book was written in the Hebrew language because the subject matter was of special interest to the Jews. Cp. 8:10, 11; 9:24; 10:14; 11:28-34; 12:1. Before them was a time of "indignation," trouble, (8:19), but their Messiah would come "to bring in everlasting righteousness" (9:24), and in the end they "shall be delivered" (12:1).

1. The vision of the ram, the he-goat and the little horn. 8:1-27.

(1) The ram. In the third year of Belshazzar, 553 B. C., Daniel was in Shushan where the king of Babylon had a royal palace. There at the river Ulai he saw a ram with two horns, one of which was higher than the other and came up last. The angel Gabriel explained the two horns to be "the kings of Media and Persia" (20). According to history, the first and shortest horn represents Media, the more ancient kingdom, the second and longest horn symbolizes Persia which transcended Media under Cyrus the Great. It is noteworthy that the kings of Persia wore a ram's head made of gold and adorned with precious stones. Rams heads with one horn higher than the other are still to be seen on the pillars at Persepolis, the royal Capital of the empire. The conquests of the ram in v. 4 were accomplished under Cyrus and his successors, so that according to Esther 1:1 the Medo-Persian empire extended "from India even unto Ethiopia, over a hundred and seven and twenty provinces."

(2) The he-goat. This animal according to Gabriel signified "the king (or kingdom) of Greece" (21), and the horn between his eyes is explained to be "the first king" who was Alexander the Great. The goat came from the west with great speed, "touched not the ground," which denotes the swiftness of Alexander's conquest. The Persian ram was unable to stand before the furious attack of the goat; his horns were broken and his body trampled upon. This prophecy was shown Alexander at Jerusalem, and "he supposed that himself was the person intended" (Jos. Ant. XI. 8, 5). By him the Persian army was subdued, the country ravaged and Persepolis burned. "The he-goat magnified himself exceedingly" through conquest at which time "the great horn was broken—Alexander died—and four notable

horns came up in its place. These signify the four divisions of the empire after the death of Alexander to which reference has been made in this chapter.

(3) The little horn. On account of its doings against God and His people it is of absorbing interest. But what power is indicated by this horn? "The angel Gabriel told Daniel it represents "a king of fierce countenance" (23). This king is generally understood to be Antiochus Epiphanes who ruled over Syria from 175-164 B. C. That is the view held by Josephus, who says: "Our nation suffered these calamities under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel saw, and many years before wrote what things should come to pass" (Ant. X. 11, 7). Several important facts relative to this horn are indicated:

(a) The place of its origin. It should rise out of one of the four divisions of Alexander's empire (9). Syria was one of them and there Antiochus ruled.

(b) The time of its beginning. It should appear "in the latter time" of these four kingdoms, "when transgressors are come to the full" (23). The divine purpose in its coming was to punish the Jews who had apostatized from the true faith. Many made "a covenant with the heathen," "departed from the holy covenant," and "sacrificed to the idols" (1 Macc. 1:12-16, 45). According to the author of the book of Maccabees, the Jews themselves understood the persecutions by Antiochus in that light. He urges them to "consider the things that happened, not as being for destruction, but for the correction of our nation" (2 Mac. 6:12).

(c) Its character (23, 25).

(1') It should be "of fierce countenance." The furious and savage procedure of Antiochus against the Jews and Jerusalem answers fully to this prediction. "With a furious mind, he took the city by force of arms." In three days he slew eighty thousand persons without regard for age or sex. Besides, he desecrated

the Temple and robbed it of its treasures (2 Mac. 5:11-14, 21).

(2') It should understand "dark sentences." This means that he would practice deceit and cunning. By such means he obtained the throne of Syria. To this end he enlisted the aid of Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus, his brother, by flattering speech and great promises of friendship (Pridaux's Connection, Book II. An. 175). In dealing with the Jews, "he spoke to them peaceably words in deceit" and then struck Jerusalem with a great slaughter (1 Mac. 1:31, 32,; 2 Mac. 5:25, 26). By dark and tortuous diplomacy he tried to usurp the throne of Egypt from his young nephew Ptolemy Philometer.

(3') It should "stand up against the Prince of princes," or God (25). This Antiochus did when he "cut in pieces and burned with fire the books of the law of God;" forbade the "sacrifices, and atonements to be made in the temple of God;" and "commanded the holy places to be profaned" (1 Mac. 1:59, 47, 49, 57; 2 Mac. 6:2). By some interpreters "the Prince of princes" has been explained to mean the high-priest Onias, whom Antiochus deposed and put the wicked Jason in his place (2 Mac. 4).

(4) Its wars (9). Antiochus Epiphanes "waxed exceeding great" by means of war in three geographic directions. "Toward the south," designates his conquests in Egypt where he took many cities, much spoils and would have subdued the whole country but for the intervention of the Romans (1 Mac. 1:17-20; Prid. Con. Book II. An. 168). "Towards the east," indicates his campaign into Persia, the purpose being "To take tributes of the countries, and to gather much money" (1 Mac. 3:31). "Toward the glorious land," points out his terrifying and destructive invasion of the land of Israel (1 Mac. 1:21-67).

(5) Its duration (13, 14). The question asked is,

"How long shall the sanctuary and the host (people) be trodden under foot? The answer given reads in the Hebrew, "Until two thousand and three hundred evening-mornings. Then shall the sanctuary be justified." The period designated by "evening-mornings" in v. 14 is referred to in v. 26 as "the evenings and mornings." It is the Hebrew way of counting time, for with them the day began and ended at sunset. cp. Gen. 1:5.

The computation of the 2300 days may start with the date when the temple was cleansed (justified) and when the Jews offered the daily sacrifice on the new altar. This took place on the 25th day of the month Casleu, 165 B. C. (I Mac. 4:52). Counting back 2300 days from that point brings us into 171 B. C., when Menelaus, a usurper of the high-priest's office, led the Jews into the apostacy of heathenism previously prepared for by his brother Jason (Prid. Con. B. II. An. 171) (Cp. 2 Mac. 4:23-50). In the same year Antiochus sacrificed a sow on the Jewish altar of burnt-offerings and sprinkled the broth on the sacred buildings.

It has also been suggested that because the burnt-offering (vv. 11, 12) was offered morning and evening daily (Ex. 29:38, 39), the meaning would be that it would cease for 2300 times, or during a period of 1150 days. That period would, in general, harmonize with the time from the desecration of the temple by Antiochus till its cleansing, which was 3½ years according to Josephus (Wars, I. 1, 1).

(6) Its end (25). It should "be broken without hands;" i. e., without human power. On returning from his unsuccessful expedition into Persia, Antiochus Epiphanes heard of the defeat of his armies by the Jews under the Maccabees. His rage knew no bounds, and he determined to return to Judea for the purpose of exterminating every Jew. But on the way he was seized with sudden and violent pains in the bowels. He also fell from his chariot and was sorely bruised. In this condi-

tion he was taken to a little town called Tabae where, through indescribable ulcers on his body and mental anguish, he died a loathsome maniac (2 Mac. 9:1-13). This reminds us of a similar judgment visited upon Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:12-23). In each case there was divine intervention.

2. The seventy weeks (9:1-27). Daniel had been reading the prophecy of Jeremiah (25:11; 29:10) from which he understood that the time of the Captivity was about to expire. He saw no indications of a return, so in great anxiety he took the matter to God in prayer. Before he was through speaking the angel Gabriel came to him with a revelation concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah. The seventy weeks begin with the command to rebuild Jerusalem and end with the Anointed (Heb. the Messiah) causing the Jewish "sacrifice and oblation to cease," which he did by his death when the law of Moses was taken out of the way (Col. 2:14). The weeks were divided by the angel into three periods—seven weeks, three score and two weeks, and one week. According to the year-day count (Ezek. 4:6) they cover a period of four hundred and ninety years.

(1) The seven weeks, or forty-nine years. Within this period Jerusalem should be rebuilt, for it begins with the command to restore the city. Four decrees were made by different Persian kings concerning the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of their temple and city. The question before us is, which one of these decrees marks the beginning of the seventy weeks? We know that the period ends with the death of the Messiah "in the midst" of the last week (v. 27), or 34 A. D. This necessitates a deduction of three and one half years from the four hundred and ninety which leaves four hundred eighty-six and one-half years. Within this time the events of the prophecy, except the destruction of Jerusalem, are to be accomplished.

The first decree was made by Cyrus the Great in 536 B. C. and is found in Ezra 1:1-4. Zerubbabel led this return, and at that time the altar of burnt-offerings was set up and the foundations of the temple were laid (Ezra 3:1-13). From this decree the seventy weeks cannot date, for from 536 B. C. to the death of Christ there are more than $486\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The second decree was issued by Darius Hystaspes in 519 B. C. and is recorded in Ezra 6:1-12. From this we cannot count the $486\frac{1}{2}$ years, for it was issued to confirm the first decree. The enemies of the Jews in Judea had secured an order from Artaxerxes to stop the work on the temple, and it was suspended for fifteen years (Ezra 4). The decree by Darius caused operations to be resumed and the temple was finished (Ezra 6:13-22).

The third decree was made by Artaxerxes Longemaneus, thought to be the Ahasueres in the book of Esther, in 457 B. C. and is found in Ezra 7:11-26. This brought about the second return of the Jews from Babylon under Ezra. This return marks the central point of the restoration. Ezra was "the priest and scribe of the law." He is spoken of by Jews and Gentiles as "The Restorer of the Law." To him was given authority to "appoint magistrates and judges," rectify abuses, and enforce the law of God. He fully restored the Jewish state, civil, and religious. With him began the spiritual rebuilding of Jerusalem. It must be remembered that the rebuilding consisted not only of the material outside, but also of the vivifying spirit within. With this decree and the coming of Ezra begins the count of the $486\frac{1}{2}$ years, as further calculations will show.

The fourth decree was also made by Artaxerxes Longemaneus in 445 B. C. By this Nehemiah obtained permission to rebuild the walls of the city and assist Ezra in the work of restoration (Neh. 2:1-8).

We are now ready to conclude that this division of seven weeks extends from 457 B. C. to 408 B. C., and

within this time Jerusalem was rebuilt. The angel said that the city should be rebuilt "in troublous times." This circumstance was fulfilled by the Samaritans, who were a mixed people racially and religiously (2 Kings 17:24-33). The madness of their opposition is told in Ezra, Nehemiah and Josephus Ant. XI. 2-5.

(2) The sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years. This division of the weeks begins with 408 B. C., the year in which the seven weeks ended. By adding to this date the 434 years of the sixty-two weeks, we come to 26 A. D. But there is an error of four years in our calendar. In 525 A. D., Dionysius Exiguus, a monk, published an Easter Cycle in which he made a mistake of four years in dating the birth of Christ. This mistake has never been corrected. Accordingly the birth of Christ is fixed at 5 B. C., whereas in fact it was 1 A. D. By adding four years to 26 A. D., we are brought to 30 A. D., the year in which Jesus "began to teach" (Lk. 3:23).

This period of 434 years was intended to compass the time from the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the beginning of Christ's public ministry. In this period Palestine came under Greek dominion during which the chosen people were afflicted by Antiochus Epiphanes, but providentially preserved. Then followed the Roman dominion in which John the Baptist prepared a people for the Lord (Lk. 1:17). This preparation marks the end of the sixty-two weeks and makes possible the activities of the last prophetic week.

(3) The one week, or seven years. The great event of this period is the death of the Messiah "in the midst of the week" which caused the Jewish "sacrifice and oblation to cease." Among other things, the purpose of this prediction was to indicate that our Lord's public ministry would last three and one-half years. This is established by gospel facts. John gives us the length of our Lord's public ministry by counting four Passover

feasts (2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 11:55). Since he was crucified during the last feast, His ministry lasted about three and one-half years and closed in 34 A. D. The purpose in the prediction respecting the last week is to point out the great events connected with the Savior's mission. They were:

(a) "To finish (Marg. "to restrain") transgression." This has to do with the conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. When our Lord at the time of His temptation overcame satan, and later cast out demons, he restrained transgression of men by exercising control over the cause. This restraint is now continued by the preaching of the gospel, for by this means the church is said to "bruise satan" (Rom. 16:20).

(b) "To make an end of sins." According to marginal rendering, it means "to seal up" sins, or put them out of sight. This the Redeemer did by His atonement, the meaning of which is "to cover." He not only covers the sins committed before His death (Heb. 9:15), but also those committed afterwards (1 Jno. 2:2). Sin, when forgiven, is said to be "covered" (Ps. 32:1).

(c) "To make reconciliation for iniquity." This is the result from atonement. When our sins are covered by the blood of Christ, we are reconciled to God and have peace with Him (2 Cor. 5:18; Rom. 5:1).

(d) "To bring in everlasting righteousness." In the New Testament the word "righteousness" means: (1) That by which one is made righteous. Christ is the means, the instrument, for He "was made unto us Wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). (2) Purity of life, uprightness. Hence, "we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:12). This righteousness secured by and lived through Jesus Christ is final and everlasting. This could not be said of righteousness according to the law of Moses.

(e) "To seal up vision and prophecy." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10). Jesus said that He came to fulfill the law and the prophets, to answer to the types of law and the predictions of the prophets (Matt. 5:17). Visions, types and prophecies had their fulfillment and end in Him (Rom. 10:4).

(f) "To anoint the most holy." The literal rendering of "the most holy" is holiness of holiness; i. e., one who has all holiness in himself. This was true of Christ, and is given as one reason for His anointing (Heb. 1:9). He is the divine Prophet, Priest and King; and with reference to these offices He was anointed by Jehovah with the Holy Spirit at the time of His baptism (Acts 10:38; Matt. 3:16).

(g) To "make a firm covenant with many." The Messiah was given "for a covenant of the people" (Isa. 42:6). In the Christian Scriptures this is styled "the new covenant," and it was confirmed, made "firm," by the blood of Christ (Lk. 22:20. cp. Heb. 9:18-24).

(h) To cause "the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." In Heb. 10:1-10 Paul states the necessity of taking away the Mosaic sacrifices in order to make room for the better one of our Lord. In Col. 2:14-17 we are informed when these sacrifices ceased. Since they were a part of the law of Moses, they expired when that instrument was abrogated.

(i) To "destroy the city and the sanctuary." This was also predicted by the Savior (Matt. 24:1-28), and He spoke of it as a judgment upon the Jews because they rejected Him (Matt. 23:37-39). It was accomplished by the Romans in 70 A. D., and the destruction of the corrupt city was complete as "with a flood."

3. A Great Warfare. 10:1-12:13.

(1) Daniel's vision of the heavenly messenger. (10:1-11:1).

(a) The occasion for this vision. Daniel was in

a depressed condition. With some of his friends he had gone to the river Hiddekel (Tigris) where he had been mourning, fasting and praying for three weeks. The causes of his being in this state of mind and heart seem to be as follows:

(1') The present condition of his people. Four years had gone by since the revelation of the seventy weeks. Only a small portion of the Jews had returned to restore their temple and city. The rebuilding should be done "in troublous times," and Daniel knew of the opposition in Judea. Being about ninety years of age, he was too feeble to help them, and in tender solicitude for his people he takes the matter to God in prayer.

(2') The need of more knowledge concerning the future. According to the messenger's statement in 12, there was something Daniel did not fully understand. The thing which he had set his heart "to understand" was undoubtedly some parts in the previous visions. They had to do with "what shall befall thy people in the latter days" (14). In the vision of chapter eight, a time of "indignation" should come upon God's people (19). In chapter nine the Messiah should come and die at the hands of others, and the beloved city should once more be destroyed. Concerning these things Daniel was seeking further light and the messenger came with fuller information.

(b) The heavenly messenger. The divine intervention in the lives of men through spirit agencies constitutes a very interesting portion of this chapter. The messenger, none other than the Word, or Son of Man (cp. Rev. 1:12-16), would have come to Daniel sooner, but was hindered in the court of Persia. He would have been overcome, if "Michael, one of the chief princes" among God's angels and the protector of the Jews (21), had not come to help him influence Cyrus in favor of the Hebrew people. When he had revealed to Daniel the fortunes and destiny of the Jews, he said, "now will I

return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I go forth, lo, the prince of Greece shall come" (20). From this we learn that Jehovah had an angelic ambassador in the court of Greece also who would influence Alexander to go against Persia. The terrible degradation of that court drove away Jehovah's ambassadors. The usefulness of the Persian kingdom in the world was spent. Its end had come, and Alexander was divinely commissioned to dethrone Darius Codomanus, its last king.

(2) The future of the Jews (11:2-12:13). In the eleventh chapter the angel outlines history from the beginning of the Persian period down to the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. The warfare described would be a time of trouble to the Jews on account of their political relation to the governments involved and their geographical location between those warring countries.

(a) Conflict between Persia and Greece (2-4).

v. 2. The four kings of Persia referred to who succeeded Cyrus the Great were Cambyses, son and successor of Cyrus; Smerdis, the usurper; Darius Hystaspes; and Xerxes the Great, whose wealth is famous in history, who warred against Greece. Herodotus tells us that he arrived at Thermopylae with an army of 2,641,610 fighting men gathered from forty-nine nations.

v. 3. The invasion of Greece by Xerxes gave Alexander the Great cause for attacking Persia. He defeated Darius Codomanus in 331 B. C. at Arbela, and the next year burned Persepolis, the capital of the empire, which completed the conquest of Medo-Persia.

v. 4. When Alexander had reached the zenith of his power, his kingdom should be broken and divided into four parts. Accordingly, history relates that he died in 323 B. C. from a debauch and his kingdom was divided among four of his generals. Cassander got Greece and Macedonia; Ptolemy Soter, Egypt; Coele, Syria and

Palestine; Lysimachus, Asia Minor; and Selencus, Upper Asia.

(b) Struggle between Egypt and Syria (5-20). This division is very complicated by many and minute historical events, hence there is need of the closest possible attention to the facts of history. The rulers of Egypt are spoken of as "the king of the south," while the rulers of Syria are described as "the king of the north." Palestine is located between these two countries and becomes the ground for contention between the rival dynasties. The prophecy is delivered to show the effect of this warfare upon the Jews.

v. 5. The king of the south is Ptolemy Soter, king of Egypt and one of Alexander's generals. The one that should "be strong above him" is Seleucus Nicator, another of Alexander's princes, who reigned over Northern Syria and Babylonia, so that his dominion was very great.

v. 6. Antiochus Theos, grandson of Seleucus Nicator, is king of the north. He was at war with Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt. This war came to a close by agreement that Antiochus should put away his wife, Laodice, and her two sons and marry Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy, and give to her offspring the crown of Syria. In this way Ptolemy planned not only to have his descendants sit on the throne of Syria, but also to have the protection of that country. But as soon as Ptolemy was dead, Berenice was divorced and Laodice reinstated, who, in order to secure the crown of Syria for her son, Seleucus Callinicus, had her husband poisoned and her son crowned. Later she had Berenice and her son murdered, who thus lost "the strength of her arm," and the original scheme concerning the throne of Syria failed.

vv. 7-9. While Berenice was besieged in Daphne, to which she and her infant son had fled, her brother Ptolemy Euergetes, the "shoot from her roots," collected an army and hastened to her rescue, but before

he reached her, she and her son were killed. He then put to death Laodice, conquered all of Syria as far as the Tigris, and returned to Egypt with many spoils.

vv. 10-12. The sons of Saleucus Callinicus, Saleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great, undertook to recover the territory lost by their father. Ceraunus was poisoned by two of his soldiers and Antiochus was left to carry on the war alone. He recovered all of Syria and then started for Egypt. This caused Ptolemy Philopater to meet him at Raphia on the Mediterranean sea, where Antiochus was defeated and all of Palestine and Syria were again placed under Egypt. Because the Jews would not let Ptolemy enter the temple at Jerusalem, he became angry against the whole nation. Jerome tells us that after he had returned to Alexandria, he martyred sixty thousand Jews in that city, and thus "cast down tens of thousands."

vv. 13-17. As soon as Ptolemy Philopater was dead and his five-year-old son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, was on the throne, Antiochus the Great disregarded the treaty made at Raphia and undertook to conquer Egypt. Philip of Macedon entered into league with him, the purpose of which was to divide among themselves Ptolemy's dominions. The persecuted Jews also broke off their allegiance to Egypt and joined Antiochus, thus they helped "to establish the vision." But they failed in making Judea independent, for Ptolemy's forces, led by Scopas, overcame Antiochus and recovered Palestine and Syria. Later Antiochus took Zidon and other fortified cities of Ptolemy, so that he established his authority "in the glorious land" (Judea). Next, he laid a scheme by which to obtain the whole kingdom of Egypt. To accomplish this, he gave his beautiful daughter Cleopatra in marriage to Ptolemy; but in this he failed, for she was faithful to her husband and sided against her father.

vv. 18, 19. Antiochus then paid attention to "the isles," or coastlands of the Mediterranean; but these

were in alliance with Rome, and Scipio, the "prince," defeated him in Asia Minor near Magnesia. This caused him to return to Antioch, "the fortress of his own land." In order to pay the heavy tribute levied upon him by Rome, he robbed the temple of Jupiter Belus at Elymais. When the people heard of it, they were so enraged that they slew him and his followers. In this he stumbled and fell and was not found.

v. 20. Antiochus the Great was succeeded by his son, Seleucus Philopater. In order to raise the tribute of one thousands talents for the Romans each year and to get support for his own kingdom, he sent his treasurer Heliodorus to rob the temple at Jerusalem. But after a reign of twelve years he was poisoned by Heliodorus and was thus "destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle."

(c) Antiochus Epiphanes (21-45). A description of this contemptible person has already been given in chapter eight, but for the sake of greater clearness to Daniel, the character and doings of Antiochus are repeated with considerable enlargement. It seems proper that God should give particular attention to this person, for during his reign the Jews had to pass through a persecution the most fierce and deadly of all they had suffered from Syrian or Egyptian kings.

(1') Events from his accession to the throne of Syria until the Maccabean uprising (21-35).

v. 21. Seleucus Philopater died without an heir. This gave the opportunity for his brother, the vile and wily Antiochus Epiphanes, to secure the throne of Syria "by flatteries."

vv. 22, 23. Those who oppose his succession shall be overcome. Even the high priest Onias, "the prince of the covenant," was displaced in favor of the apostate Jason (2 Mac. 4:7). By working "deceitfully," this mean king should come into power with but few adherents—"a small people."

v.24. He shall spoil "the fattest places of the prov-

ince;" and by lavish distribution of booty shall make friends and thus secure himself (See 1 Mac. 3:30).

vv. 25-27. He shall war against Egypt and be successful, because the king of Egypt would be betrayed by traitors. This also came to pass. Ptolemy's trusted courtiers, Enlaeus and Lœnaeus devised his ruin. Ptolemy Macron, governor of Cyprus, revolted. The Alexandrians renounced their allegiance when they saw the war go against their king and they proclaimed Euergetis, his younger brother, king over Egypt. Even while the two kings would be sitting at the same table in apparent friendship "they shall speak lies." But these plots and counter plots shall fail, for the end was not yet according to "the time appointed" by Jehovah.

v. 28. Returning from Egypt with great plunder, "his heart shall be against the holy covenant." A false report of his death had reached Judea and this caused the high priest Jason to drive out his rival brother Menelaus, and massacre many of the Jews. This led Antiochus to believe that all the Jews were in revolt against him, whereupon he desecrated and plundered the temple and city (1 Mac. 1:22-24; 2 Mac. 5:11-21).

vv. 29-31. He was to return to Egypt at the divinely appointed time. This he did, but was stopped by order of the Roman senate—the "ships from Kittim." Indignant because of this, he was to send troops into the Holy Land who "shall profane the sanctuary, take away the continual burnt-offering, and set up the abomination that maketh desolate." All this he did. On the Sabbath, when the people were assembled for worship, his troops killed the men and took the women and children captive. The city was plundered and much of it consumed by fire. He suspended Jehovah worship, imposed his heathen worship upon the Jews, and defiled the temple (2 Mac. 5:24-26; 1 Mac. 1:30-52).

vv. 32-35. This outrage upon the Jews caused the Maccabean uprising, when the faithful should "be

strong and do exploits (valiantly)" To keep alive the true faith, the "wise among the people shall instruct many" for which they would suffer persecution. In the midst of this fierce trial, "a little help" shall be given. Accordingly we read, "Then was assembled unto them the congregation of the Assideans, the stoutest of Israel, every one that had a good will for the law" (1 Mac. 2:42). The effect of such holy boldness and martyrdom would be "to refine and to purify" the people of God.

(2') His blasphemous pride (36-39). These verses give a description of the presumptuous impiety and arrogant conduct of Antiochus.

v. 36. He shall "magnify himself above every god." This he did by assuming divine honors, the proof of which is found on his coins which may now be seen in the British Museum. On these he called himself "King Antiochus, God Manifest." Having assumed this position, he spoke "marvellous things against the God of gods," the God of Israel. His mad career should be prosperous until "the indignation" of Jehovah on Israel had been accomplished.

v. 37. He will disregard the gods of his fathers by paying honor to foreign deities. The Greek kings of Syria who had preceded Antiochus worshiped Syrian deities, but he was devoted to the Greek Zeus. He was also fond of the Roman Jupiter. To this god he erected a temple at Daphne, and started another in his own capital city, Antioch.

Nor will he regard "the desire of women." While in his campaign in the East, he heard of the riches in the temple at Nanaea and resolved to plunder it. There was the celebrated Syrian and Phoenician deity, Tammuz, who was especially worshiped by women.

v. 38, 39. He will pay particular attention to the god of fortresses, strongholds. Having taken on the Roman gods, the real deity he recognized was the Roman war god, and fortresses were his most sacred temples. How-

ever, he considered himself above all gods; and "whosoever acknowledgeth himself," would be rewarded by office, and become a possessor of land for a bribe.

(2') His end (40-45). The historical account of the closing events of his life is fragmentary and very unsatisfactory. Jerome in his notes on these verses reports Porphyry as speaking of a fourth Egyptian expedition of Antiochus, but details are lacking. Daniel gives the fullest historical outline yet available.

The king of Egypt shall provoke war against Syria, and Antiochus shall make a swift campaign into that land. On his way there he will devastate Judea and other countries, but will not molest Edom, Moab and Ammon, for that delay would give Ptolemy time to strengthen his forces. His war in Egypt will be successful through the aid of Libyians and Ethiopians, and he will secure a vast amount of wealth. But tidings of trouble in his Asiatic dominions will cause him to return. "He shall plant the tents of his palace" in the Holy Land, which he did by ordering Lysias to carry on the war with Judas Maccabeus (I Mac. 3:31-39). In the meantime Antiochus crossed the Euphrates for the purpose of subduing Artaxias, king of Armenia, who had revolted and to exact back taxes from Persia and other parts of his empire. While in Persia he heard of great wealth in the city of Elymais, where was also a temple of Diana which contained vast treasures. He resolved to plunder the city and temple, but the people had been forwarned of his design and his attempt ended in failure. He retired in shame and grief to Ecbatana in Media. There he heard of the defeat of his army in Judea and he set out with all haste to execute vengeance upon the Jews. But on the way he came to a sudden and unexpected end, which has already been described. Thus the prediction was fulfilled which says, "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

From vv. 31 to 45 it has been thought that the Ro-

mans and other powers opposing God's people are intended. There is no need of such explanation, for we have seen that Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled every point. But it may be that he is a type of others who have oppressed the children of God. If that is the divine intention, we will need to remember that Antiochus not only caused God's people to apostatize from the true faith, but he also served as a punishment of those who apostatized. With this in mind, we can see why "the abomination that maketh desolate" (31) could be applied to the Romans (Matt. 24:15), for they chastized the unbelieving Jews by destroying their city. However, the Savior might have used the language of one event by which to portray another event. The New Testament frequently uses Old Testament words and phrases that way. One illustration is found in Matt. 2:17, 18. The words were originally written concerning the Babylonian Captivity, but applied by Matthew to a similar circumstance. As Rachel, the tribal mother of the Benjamites, was represented by the prophet as weeping for her children when she saw them go into captivity, so there was weeping in Bethlehem when the children were slain by the order of Herod. It was not the fulfillment of a prediction, but the adoption of the prophet's words concerning one scene by which to describe another. Antiochus might also be a type of the great Christian apostasy, the papal church. In that event, the 2300 evenings and mornings of Dan. 8:14 must be understood to mean 2300 prophetic years, a day standing for a year (Ezek. 4:6). This would bring us to the beginning of the Millennium when the church of Christ shall be purified from all defilement of the great apostasy, just as the temple in Jerusalem was purified after having been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes.

(d) Destruction of Jerusalem (12:1). "At that time" need not mean at once after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. The words "in that day" are fre-

quently used by the prophets in passing from the near to the remote. (cp. Isa. 4:2; 29:18; Amos 9:11). In the context of these passages the prophet speaks of Israel's sins and consequent judgment. Then he announces their restoration under the Messiah as if it should follow immediately, whereas it was hundreds of years in the future. There is a similar expression in Matt. 24:29 where the word "immediately" is used to designate Christ's second coming and the end of the world. But his final coming has not yet taken place; therefore, "immediately" cannot in this place mean soon, or without delay. According to the context the meaning seems to be that the terrible judgment upon the Jews in the destruction of their city would be followed by the terrors of the final judgment day, with no intervening judgment compared to either of them.

"The time of trouble" referred to would be the next great distress to the Jews following that inflicted upon them by Antiochus. This took place in 70 A. D., when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. Then there was trouble "such as never was since there was a nation." These words are strikingly corroborated by the Savior's prediction of the same event (Mk. 13:19). And they are verified by Josephus, an eye witness, who says, "it appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were" (Preface to Wars, sec. 4).

The deliverance promised is for the Jews "found written in the book," the book of life (cp. Ex. 32:32; Ps. 69:28; Mal. 3:16; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 20:12-15). When Jerusalem was destroyed, the Christian Jews who followed the Savior's directions in Matt. 24:15-18, were delivered. At that time no doubt Michael, their prince and guardian (cp. 10:21), stood up for them and prepared a way of escape, for something took place for which there appears to be no human reason. Josephus

tells us that after Cestius Gallus had laid siege to Jerusalem, with every prospect of taking it, "he retired from the city without any reason in the world" (Wars, II. 19, 7). The flight of the church to a place of safety is confirmed by Eusebius, the church historian. He says, "The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella" (Eccl. Hist. B. III. ch. 5). Josephus refers to the same event when he states that, "many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city, as from a ship when it was going to sink" (Wars, II. 20, 1).

(e) The resurrection of the dead (12:2, 3). Daniel is informed that this shall be the next great event of hope to his people (cp. Jno. 5:28, 29). Then the "wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15) "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (See Matt. 13:43; Phil. 3:20, 21).

(f) The book sealed (12:4). The same order was given in regard to the vision of the ram and the he-goat, the reason assigned being that "it belongeth to many days to come" (8:26). Not until "the time of the end" could these predictions be understood, because they are explained by facts of history. For this reason John was commanded not to seal the Apocalypse, because the time of its fulfillment was "at hand" (Rev. 22:10). Then there shall be manifest a spirit of inquiry, "many shall run to and fro" in the book, become students of prophecy and history, and the result will be increase of knowledge.

(g) The time of the end (12:5-13). The subject-matter of this difficult paragraph is related to two questions:

(1') "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" Two other heavenly visitors, besides the one

who has given the revelation to Daniel, are now seen. By the answer to this question asked by one of them, Daniel is informed how long his people shall be afflicted by Antiochus Epiphanes. It will be for "a time, times, and a half," or three and one-half years (See explanation of 7:25). The consolatory words were uttered with the solemn emphasis of an oath and the uplifted hand toward heaven (cp. Gen. 14:22-24; Rev. 10:5, 6).

(2') "What shall be the issue of these things?" (Marg. "latter end"). "End" here is a different word in the Hebrew from "end" in v. 6, and means not the actual end, but the closing stage or part of it. Daniel wanted to know what shall be the sign of the approaching end. He was not informed of this, for the book is "sealed till the time of the end" (cp. v. 4). It was not for him to understand, but for readers in the future when these predictions should be fulfilled.

During the period of affliction the faith and character of many would be purified by the trials they must under-go (cp. Isa. 48:10). The wicked Jews will not profit by these trials, but will continue their course and remain in ignorance concerning the meaning of these things. "But they that are wise," the godly among them who would study these prophecies and their fulfillment, "shall understand."

In vv. 11, 12 further attention is given to the time of the Jewish suffering and its end. The 1290 days designate the time during which the temple was desolate and would, therefore, include the period of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of v. 7, or 1260 days. To these are added 30 days which gives the 1290 days. The end of this period should be marked by some event of which nothing is now known.

To the 1290 days are added 45 more, making 1335 in all. Just what event took place at that time is not known, but it was to be a great blessing to the Jews. It is impossible for any one now to give the two dates 1290 and 1335, historical accuracy. As yet a full history of events

in 165-164 B. C. is not available. We must, therefore, content ourselves with their general significance. The 2300 (1150 p. 144) days of 8:14, the "time, times, and a half," the 1290 days, and the 1335 days of 12:7, 11, 12, all agree as a whole in indicating three years with a shorter or longer fraction.

The closing words direct Daniel to go his ways till the end; i. e., to be not concerned about these things now, for no more revelation will be given. In the meantime he shall die and be at "rest." When the appointed time for the resurrection shall come, he shall stand in his "lot" unto "everlasting life" (v. 2).

Conclusion

Of all the books in the Bible, the book of Daniel contains the greatest moral and historical demonstration of supernatural wisdom and control in relation to the plan of the ages. There is nothing like it in all literature, sacred and secular. Its marvellous foresight and historical accuracy imprint indelibly on the student's mind and heart the following outstanding facts:

1. The inspiration of Daniel. Because of the accurate fulfillment of his predictions, modern destructive critics hold that the book of Daniel is a forgery, written after the events took place. They deny the possibility of miracles and prophecy, hence they date the book in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, 184-164 B. C. The originator of this theory was the infidel Porphyry, a violent opposer of Christianity in the third century.

But the book itself contains indisputable evidence of an earlier date and of the inspiration of its author. It begins by stating that Daniel was carried captive into Babylon "in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah" (1:1) (606 B. C.). "In the second year of his reign (602 B. C.), Nebuchadnezzar had his dream which was interpreted by Daniel (2:1). "In the first year of Belshazzar" (555 B. C.), Daniel had the vision of the four beasts and the little horn (7:1). "In the

third year of Belshazzar" (553 B. C.), the prophet saw in vision the ram, the he-goat and another little horn (8:1). "In the first year of Darius" (538 B. C.), the man of God received the revelation of the seventy weeks (9:1). "In the third year of Cyrus" (534 B. C.), there was revealed unto him "a great warfare" (10:1). Here is unshakable proof that Daniel was a contemporary of the king named; and that at the dates indicated he saw the future political and moral history of the world, the fulfillment of which proves his inspiration.

In the next place, Daniel denies his knowledge to be of his own intellectual power. He asserts that God gave to him and his three companions "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom" (1:17). In regard to the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, He it is who "giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge unto them that have understanding" (2:21, 30). The truth in his words is evident for two reasons: the king had forgotten his dream and it must be restored; the dream must be interpreted. Daniel did both, accomplishments impossible by any human without divine aid. When he interpreted the writing on the wall of Belshazzar's festal chamber, he announced it as a judgment from the Almighty whom the king had publicly outraged. The meaning of his own visions were made known to him by supernatural beings (7:16; 8:15-17). The angel Gabriel instructed him concerning the seventy weeks (9:21, 22). A heavenly messenger revealed unto him the great trouble that should come upon his people and their deliverance (10:10-14). Now, either he received his information from on high, or he wrote a lie in the name of Jehovah.

2. The political history of the world. The visions in this book outline political events from the second year of Nebuchadnezzar (602 B. C.) to the resurrection of the dead.

In Nebuchadnezzar's vision four successive political kingdoms were to be universal in power, and as such

they were to be the last. This vision projected history down to 476 A. D., a distance of ten hundred and seventy-eight years.

In Daniel's visions further political history is mapped. In the seventh chapter he saw the character and history of the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image, with the added information that the fourth should be divided into ten kingdoms. The fourth kingdom should also give rise to a politico-religious power, symbolized by a little horn. Here is a look into the future from 555 B. C. to the Millennium, for not until then shall the papal horn be completely destroyed.

In chapters eight and eleven are revealed the fortunes and destinies of Medo-Persia, Greece, Syria and Egypt. With astonishing accuracy the pen of inspiration traces the future history of these empires from 553 B. C. to 146 B. C., a period of three hundred and eighty-nine years. During this time the Jews and their temple will suffer terrible indignities, particularly from one of the Syrian rulers.

In chapter twelve further attention is given to the future history of the Jews. Their great suffering under Antiochus Epiphanes is to be eclipsed by another of greater magnitude and horror, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This unspeakable time of trouble to this pitiable people was seen six hundred and twenty-three years in the future. Coupled with this announcement is a two-fold message of hope: deliverance of "everyone that shall be found written in the book," and the resurrection of the dead.

All of these visions bear the imprint of the divine mind. Modern rationalists affirm that they were merely the results of human sagacity and political foresight. But these facts no human being could prognosticate, for no human mind can pierce the veil between the present and the future and declare with certainty what shall be the political issues in centuries and millenniums yet to come. Sound reason concludes that these things could

only be seen by the all-seeing Eye, and they could only be accomplished by the power of the Almighty.

From these considerations it must appear conclusive that nothing short of the sovereignty of Jehovah in the affairs of nations is admissable into our thinking. And we are constrained to say with Daniel that the God of heaven and earth "removeth kings and setteth up kings" (2:21) in relation to His purpose of the ages.

3. The Messiah and His kingdom. The crown and glory of Daniel's prophecy is its Messianic portrait on the sky of the future. The coming King and His Kingdom overtop all the rest in the book.

It contains the clearest prediction ever delivered concerning the King. The time of His advent in public service is set to occur at the end of "seven weeks, and three score and two weeks," or four hundred and eighty-three years from going forth of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The saving accomplishments of the King relative to lost and hopeless humanity are definitely named. Even the time of His death is fixed to occur "in the midst" of the seventieth week, thus allotting three and one-half years in which to accomplish His redemptive work.

The prediction concerning the King's Kingdom is also clear and comprehensive. This mighty empire is to have heaven for its origin, the Son of God for its King, the earth for its theater of war. It is to begin operations in mount Zion, or Jerusalem, in the days of the Roman Caesars. Its irresistible power is seen in its small beginning and final consummation. At first the Roman empire shall fall before it; at last the whole earth shall come under its control. Every foe, political and spiritual, shall go down before it, and it shall stand forever. There never has been, and there never shall be, such a moral and spiritual phenomenon exhibited upon this planet. Error is routed by truth; corruption hides its face in shame and divine judgment; and the glory of Jehovah is made the happiness of earth.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FINAL RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

There is in the divine plan for the descendants of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh a second restoration distinguished from their return from Babylon. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea (Isa. 11:11). In the ninth chapter the prophet predicts the Assyrian captivity of Israel. In chapter ten he foretells the captivity of Judah and their return. In the eleventh chapter he sees in line of their return from Babylon, but far in the future, their spiritual restoration under the Messiah.

The prophets indicate that this restoration shall affect the twelve tribes of the chosen people. Only Jews returned from Babylon (Ezra 1:5; 4:1), but in this spiritual restoration both Judah (the two tribes) and Israel (the ten tribes) shall acknowledge their Messiah. To this Isaiah bears testimony: "And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (11:12). The certainty of it was symbolically represented to Ezekiel (37:15-25). Jehovah commanded him to take two sticks. Upon one he was told to write "For Judah," and upon the other "For Joseph," who stood for Israel. Then he was directed to join "one to another into one stick." The explanation is that Jehovah will take the twelve tribes from among the nations and "make them one nation," to be ruled over by "one king" who will cleanse them of their sins.

The final cause of their present dispersion is their re-

jection of the Messiah. Their affliction began with the crucifixion of Christ. At that time they said, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25). They have received what they asked for. In their indescribable suffering from that time to the present they have been without a country, king, prophets, temple, priesthood and sacrifices, as the prophet had said they should be (Hos. 3:4). They are left entirely without means of access to God in their present religious system.

At present there is much mental confusion and misapplication of the prophecies respecting the conversion of the Jews. In order to understand by what means they shall be converted, when their conversion may be expected, and the relation of this event to the divine purpose of the ages, it becomes necessary; first, to look at the humanly devised program for this accomplishment; secondly, to lay along the side of it the divine plan.

I. The Human Plan of Israel's Restoration

1. Christ is first to return to earth in person. When He comes, the dead saints shall be raised from their graves and the living saints shall be changed (1 Cor. 15:52). Then they shall all be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thes. 4:17), where they shall enjoy the marriage feast of the Lamb (Rev. 19:17). These speculators on the prophecies are very certain that the conversion of Israel shall not occur before Christ's second coming.

2. Israel is to be gathered to Palestine in unbelief. It is affirmed that this shall take place while the saints are up in the air with their Lord. When the Israelites have all returned to their land, they shall rebuild their city and temple, and re-establish their ancient religion with its priesthood and sacrifices, as outlined in Ezekiel, chapters forty to forty-six. In this period they shall advance in iniquity through the leadership of a false Messiah and they shall make a covenant with Antichrist, the apostate Christendom and blatant infidelity,

the result of which shall be a terrible distress to the Jews, called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7). This tribulation is construed as a judgment upon Israel and all the ungodly Gentile nations.

3. Israel is then to be converted by the personal appearance of the Lord. When the iniquity is at its height and the cause of Christ on earth appears hopelessly lost, then shall the Lord with His saints come down out of the air to the earth. Israel shall look upon Him "Whom they have pierced" (Zech. 12:10). Their conversion will be miraculous, like as Paul's, by beholding their Messiah. Their restoration, therefore, shall not be accomplished by means of the gospel proclaimed, but by seeing the Lord.

4. The Lord is to reign in person at Jerusalem. It is claimed by these modern prophets that the reign of Christ in Jerusalem shall mark the beginning of the Millennium, the setting up of His kingdom, and the restoration of the throne of David. For a thousand years His throne shall remain in Jerusalem which shall be the capitol of His kingdom. There the nations of earth shall come to worship Him and to receive His laws.

Here is a brief summary of the fundamental points in this system, born in human speculation on the Word of God and His ways of dealing with His ancient people. Respected reader, how does it appear to you? Do you see in this scheme for Israel's restoration anything incompatible with the gospel plan of salvation? Would re-establishment of Judaism conflict with the Kingdom of Christ? Is the order of events in this program of final things in conflict with the revealed plan of the ages? These questions necessarily intrude themselves. Any system of interpretation not in harmony with the Bible as a whole, or any of its parts, cannot be true. This principle is of long standing and universally received.

II. The Divine Plan for Israel's Conversion

1. The key of interpretation. This key is the typology of the Jewish state. The Jewish nation and its religion were "a shadow of the good things to come" (Heb. 10:1; 1 Cor. 10:11). They looked forward to the Christ and His spiritual kingdom now in existence on earth under the form of His church. Therefore all believers in Christ, Jews and Gentiles, are styled Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29), Israelites (Gal. 6:16), Jews (Rom. 2:28) constituting twelve tribes (Matt. 19:28; Rev. 7:4-8). As Israel of old came to mount Sinai for their law, so Christians have come to mount Zion for their rule of life (Heb. 12:22). As fleshly Israel had Jerusalem in Judea for their religious capitol, so Christians have the heavenly Jerusalem of which the earthly was a type (Heb. 12:22; Gal. 4:26); their citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:21). Moreover, believers in Christ are said to be circumcised (Phil. 3:3) with a circumcision of the heart (Rom. 2:29). They, too, have a High Priest (Heb. 6:20) who ministers in the true tabernacle typified by that erected by Moses (Heb. 8:1, 2). As Aaron's sons were priests in connection with the tabernacle service, so Christians, whom they typified, are a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9), who offer spiritual sacrifices (Rom. 12:1, 2; Heb. 13:15, 16). As the people of the type had a kingdom and a king, the greatest of whom was David, so Christians have a kingdom (Heb. 12:28) with David's Son and Lord as their King (Acts 2:34-36).

It appears that there was not a single part of the Jewish state that has not its counter part in the church of Christ. For that reason the Christian institution is presented in the terminology of the Jewish theocracy. This important fact has been entirely overlooked by the majority of modern interpreters of the prophecies concerning the Jews. Hence their scheme of literal interpretation contains the wildest guesses and basest deductions ever produced by mortals. They plant their

telescope on Mt. Sinai in Arabia instead of on Mt. Zion in Judea. Instead of interpreting the Old Testament by the New, as did Christ and His apostles, these modern system-makers and world-builders interpret the New Testament by the Old. Having thus lost their bearings and their way, how can they guide the searcher for the meaning of the Scriptures? It is a case of the blind leading the blind, both of whom will fall into the pit (Matt. 15:14).

2. The time of their conversion. In the divine program it is revealed that Israel shall continue in unbelief "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25). What, then, is the meaning of the term *pleroma*, translated "fulness?" In Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament it means: (1) "That which is (or has been filled)", like a vessel filled with something. (2) "That which fills or with which a thing is filled." (3) "Fulness, abundance, full number." It is evident that the third definition is the one used by Paul, hence he means to say that Israel will not be converted until the complete number of the Gentiles have come into the church. But this exact number is not revealed in the Scriptures, therefore no man can set the time of Israel's conversion. It is not for us "to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority" (Acts 1:7). Those who teach that this event shall take place after Christ's second coming, and after the Jews have returned to Palestine, boldly intrude into the secret counsel of God. He did not intend that students of the prophecies should peer beyond the unfilled predictions and dogmatically say thus and so they shall be fulfilled. For that reason He ordered Daniel to "shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4).

This period within which the Gentiles shall be evangelized is by our Lord designated "the times of the Gentiles" (Lk. 21:24). It is spoken of in contrast with the

time of the Jews when they were visited by their Messiah whom they rejected (Lk. 19:42, 44). The Savior told them that during the Gentile age not only shall the city of Jerusalem be controlled by Gentiles, but it shall also be trodden under foot; i. e., be dishonored and oppressed by them. Such has been its history to this day.

When did the times of the Gentiles begin? The theorists on the prophecies hold that the period was symbolized by the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The four empires represented by that image were Gentilic. It is claimed that the political powers symbolized by the ten toes are still in existence and shall remain until Christ shall come and destroy them. Therefore, it is assumed that the Gentile age began with the Babylonian empire and shall end with the second coming of Christ and the return of the Jews to Palestine. This is a huge guess resulting from inattention to the Scriptures. First, they miss the purpose of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The design was to show him that his kingdom was to be succeeded by three others, and that all four should finally be destroyed by a fifth, the Kingdom of God. In fine, the divine purpose was to announce the overthrow of the heathen governments by the Messiah's Kingdom, and no more. The Gentile age referred to by Jesus and Paul was not even hinted at by the prophet Daniel. In the next place, these modern prophets have failed to note the context of Lk. 21:24 and Rom. 11:25. In each place the age of the Gentiles is mentioned because the Jews rejected their Messiah. For this reason Jesus pronounced judgment, not only upon them but also upon their city. Paul states that "by their unbelief they were broken off," or rejected of God, and that the Gentiles were grafted in "by faith" in Christ (Rom. 11:20). From this is clear that the time of the Jews and the times of the Gentiles must be defined by the attitude of both parties toward the Messiah proclaimed. Jesus and Paul

make it purely a religious question. To inject into it the political idea represented by Nebuchadnezzar's image of the four empires is to scramble the Scriptures and to take away all the light in them upon this important subject. The real answer to the question as to when the times of the Gentiles began is found in the book of Acts. The tenth chapter contains the account of the first Gentiles being called through Peter's preaching of the gospel to the household of Cornelius. This took place about 41 A. D. The thirteenth chapter records the labors of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia. When the Jews "contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed," the evangelists told them, "lo, we turn to the Gentiles." This occurred during Paul's first missionary tour which lasted from 44 to 50 A. D. Now, since the times of the Gentiles must be dated from their relation to Christ and His church, we have here two events which mark the beginning of that period.

3. The place of their conversion. Shall their conversion take place in dispersion, or in Palestine? Paul says, "out of Zion" shall come their Deliverer (Rom. 11:26). The modern prophet says their Deliverer shall come to Zion out of the air with His saints. Let it be observed that the Hebrew text of Isa. 59:20, 21 which Paul quotes in the Septuagint with modification reads, "a Redeemer will come to Zion." The two passages are harmonized as follows: The Redeemer shall come out of Zion (the church) to Zion (the Jewish people). In either rendering there is no ground for believing that Zion means the literal city of Jerusalem. The following is admitted by all: First, that the Redeemer referred to in the above quotation can be none other than the Lord Christ. Second, that He is now in His church which is His body, styled also mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22). Third, that if He is ever to come to anybody, He must be brought through the preachings of the gospel by the church (Mk. 16:15). It follows, there-

fore, that Israel will be converted wherever they shall hear and obey the gospel.

From the Old Testament prophecies it seems that Israel shall return to Palestine, but of this there is no promise in the New Testament. However, if a return to their former land is a part of the divine plan, it is both reasonable and Scriptural to expect it, not in order to their conversion, but as a **consequence thereof**. They lost their land on account of rebellion against Jehovah, and it is very probable that they shall regain it on account of obedience to His will. This is in harmony with cause and effect. Moreover, this idea is supported by the word of Jehovah through the prophets. In Ezekiel (36:24-27) He promises to gather them out of all the countries, to cleanse them from all their filthiness, to give them a new heart, and to put His Spirit within them. Let it be noticed that in this and all other prophecies concerning their restoration, the return to the land and material prosperity are linked with spiritual blessings. There is no indication that their temporal welfare shall precede their spiritual enjoyment. To force the period designated as "the great tribulation" and "the time of Jacob's trouble" in between Israel's return to Palestine and their conversion to Christ is doing violence to the word of God.

4. Means of their conversion. In 2 Cor. 3:14-16 Paul describes their past and present spiritual condition as that of a hardened mind and a veiled heart. Therefore, their turning to the Lord must be effected by mental and spiritual means in the gospel. This is further made certain by the same apostle in Rom. 11:26, 27. The Deliverer "shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob," or as it reads in Isa. 27:9, "the iniquity of Jacob be forgiven." But this forgiveness of their sins is a matter of "covenant unto them" from Jehovah. This covenant is given in Jer. 31:31-34, and Paul informs us in Heb. 8:6-13 that it is the gospel covenant of which Jesus is the Mediator.

This new covenant came into operation on the day of Pentecost, 34 A. D., at which time three thousand of Jacob's descendants complied with its terms of faith in the Messiah, repentance of sin, and immersion in water in the name of their Redeemer unto remission of sins (Acts 2:37-41).

Such, in brief, are the means divinely provided for Israel's restoration. How different this plan is from the humanly devised scheme of their conversion! No miraculous appearance of the Lord is to bring it about. Not even the re-establishment of the Jewish religion is contemplated. Those who hold that view, have, according to Paul, misunderstood the Scriptures. He insists that the law of Moses, civil and religious, terminated forever on the cross of Christ (Col. 2:14-17); that Christ is the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). He argues that "the gospel is the, not a, power of God unto salvation "for both Jews and Gentiles" (Rom. 1:16, 17). He positively declares that Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, thus making the two one (Eph. 2:14-16). Never again can there be any racial distinction among God's people nor the re-establishment of the Jewish religion which could not remove sin. What, then, is the purpose of Ezekiel's description in chapters forty to forty-eight of the restored Jewish theocracy? Plainly this: To present to Israel their spiritual restoration through the Messiah as revealed now by the gospel in symbols and language with which they were familiar. This is also in harmony with Hebrew terminology which we have found that the apostles used in describing the Christian institution.

5. The throne of David. It is contended by some that David's throne has not yet been set up, but that it shall be rebuilt when the Jews have returned to Palestine and have accepted the Messiah. They base their contention upon Amos 9:11, 12, quoted by James in Acts 15:16-18.

In order to deal fairly and intelligently with this sub-

ject it is necessary to induce all the facts in the case before conclusion can be drawn.

(1) The throne of David was originally the throne of God. When Israel was constituted a nation at mount Sinai, Jehovah became their King (Ex. 19:4-6). Later when they wanted a human king like the nations about them, Samuel the prophet was grieved, but Jehovah told him to let them have their way, "for they have not rejected thee, but me" (1 Sam. 8:7). The king allowed them was merely a representative of Jehovah in the government of His people. Jehovah was still king. David ruled according to the same arrangement. These important facts seem to have been overlooked entirely by these literalists who insist that the restored throne of David is to be composed of literal Jews, in literal Palestine, ruled over by the personal Messiah in literal Jerusalem. Be it remembered that this throne was originally in heaven, and that a human representative was permitted for a limited time.

(2) It should be established forever (2 Sam. 7:16. cp. Ps. 89:3, 4). Solomon and other descendants of David occupied this throne after Jehovah's covenant with David, but it is evident that the kings of Judah could not exhaust the promise that it should be established forever. Judah's royal representatives can no longer be found. The Jews themselves own that their family registers as well as their tribes are lost. There is but one way left in which the word of Jehovah to David can be made good and that is for Christ to be seated upon David's throne.

(3) Christ is now seated upon the throne of David. The development of this fact is as follows: The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that to her promised Son "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David" (Lk. 1:32). Has that promise been fulfilled? Peter, on the day of Pentecost in 34 A. D., assured the fleshly Israel that it had been fulfilled at that time (Acts 2:29-

36). He spoke of Jehovah's oath to David, "that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne." Then he referred to David's prediction of the resurrection of Christ as a necessary prerequisite in order that Jehovah's promise and oath to David might be made good. Finally, he announced by the Spirit of God that Jesus had been exalted to the throne of God, and thus Jehovah's promise to David concerning his throne was fulfilled. At once three thousand of David's fleshly seed believed this fact and bowed to David's Lord. Moreover, the fulfillment of this promise is confirmed by James in his speech reported in Acts 15:14-18. First, he states the fact that God has visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. Next, he points out that the conversion of the Gentiles fulfilled the prediction by Amos (9:11, 12) concerning the rebuilding of David's tabernacle or house. Be it remembered that Peter on Pentecost said that this promise to David was then fulfilled in the coronation of the Messiah. This establishment of David's throne should, according to Amos, be followed by "the residue of men," the Gentiles, seeking the Lord. This they had done ever since Peter's visit to Caesarea which resulted in the first Gentile converts.

From this induction of facts, the following deductions will be evident:

1. That the throne of David, being originally the throne of God, was located in heaven. It follows, therefore, that its re-establishment must take place in heaven not in Jerusalem in Palestine. This point has been fully demonstrated by the fulfillment of Jehovah's promise to David, for Jesus was crowned in heaven and is there now seated upon the throne of David, according to the interpretation of the apostle Peter.

2. That His throne is a spiritual reign including all of God's people, Jews and Gentiles. The Jews came first

under the sway of the Messiah's scepter, then the Gentiles. Therefore, those who hold that the throne of David has not yet been set up, and that when it shall be established only Jews will be included, have signally missed the teachings of the scriptures. Their theory has so affected their mind that they cannot hear Peter's announcement of its establishment on Pentecost, nor can they see the explanation by James to the effect that the Gentiles also fulfill the prophecy by Amos.

A little attention to the context of the prediction by Amos will make the subject clear. In 9:7-10 he predicts not only the impending captivity of Israel in Babylon but also their dispersion "among all the nations." Then in vv. 11, 12 he predicts their spiritual restoration under the imagery of rebuilding the tabernacle of David. In quoting these verses, James used the Greek translation of the Old Testament. The expression "in that day" of Amos 9:11 in the Hebrew text corresponds to the words "After these things" in the Greek text used by James in Acts 15:16. Now, it is contended by the theorists that the expression "After these things" in Acts has for its antecedent, not Israel's dispersion as stated by Amos, but God visiting the Gentiles and taking out of them a people for His name. When this conversion of the Gentiles which is now going on, is completed, the tabernacle of David shall be raised up. The fallacy in such reasoning is apparent. The law governing a quotation is that it must be understood in the light of the subject discussed by its author. As shown above, Amos was speaking of the Babylonian captivity and worldwide dispersion of Israel, and then he predicted their restoration. To make "these things" refer to the conversion of the Gentiles would make Amos say something he did not say. It is hard to exercise patience with a speaker or writer who so grossly misinterprets an author he quotes.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MILLENNIUM

In the book of Revelation John saw seven seals opened which disclose the fall of the pagan Roman empire. The seventh seal is developed by seven trumpets, and when the last is sounded this announcement is made: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever" (11:15). The kingdom of the world shall become something, but what? Is this world headed for the rocks? or for a better day? There are those who publicly proclaim, "This earth has seen its best days." Our Lord never sent anybody out with such a message of despair. Either His gospel is good news, or it is bad news. Either the Kingdom of Christ, His church, shall triumph on this earth, or the kingdom of Satan. Not in human opinions, but in God's word must we seek the answer to these questions. The gospel is "the power of God" not only in the sinner unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), but also against Satan for his overthrow (Rom. 16:20). Christ's reign shall in the end see every enemy abolished (1 Cor. 15:25, 26). Here is hope for the saints and warning to the sinners.

According to John's vision of God's outline of final events, some things must come to pass before there can be a millennium.

I. Prerequisites of the Millennium

1. Worldwide proclamation of "eternal good tidings" (Rev. 14:6, 7). Since Christ has committed the proclamation of the gospel to men, this angel (messenger) is the church. The preaching is marked by great speed, for the angel is seen "flying." The word is to go to "every nation and tribe and tongue and people." This effort shall culminate in divine judgment upon God's enemies—"the hour of His judgment is come."

In 19:11-16 is a supplemental picture of this pre-millenninal effort at subduing the Lord's enemies. The rider upon the white horse is Christ himself, called "The Word of God." He is followed by warriors "clothed in fine linen, white and pure," which garment is defined as "the righteous acts of the saints" (8). With the sword proceeding from His mouth, which is His word (cp. Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12), he shall "smite the nations." From this it is clear that the pre-millennial victory is to be won by Christ through His people and by His word, not by His personal presence merely.

2. The fall of Babylon the great (Rev. 14:8; 18:1-24). The fall of this power is announced as the result from proclaiming the eternal gospel. This institution is defined as "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth" (17:5), and church history explains it as the apostate church. Though John in Revelation places the emphasis upon the Roman Catholic church, we are to understand that the great apostasy includes, not only the Romish church, but also the Protestant denominations. This is manifestly so, because these religious bodies came out of Romanism and all of them retain some of the doctrines and practices of the Romish church. The overthrow of the apostate church becomes necessary because of her moral corruption and inimical attitude toward the Church of Christ. She is "the mother of the abominations of the earth," "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth" (17:5; 18:24).

3. The end of all human governments (Rev. 19:17-21). The symbolism of these verses contains pronouncement of divine judgment upon those who are arrayed in conflict against the "King of kings and Lord of lords." The birds of prey, which fly in the political heaven, are invited to "eat the flesh of kings, etc.; i. e., to consume their wealth and resources. "The beast," or the Romish

church, and "the kings of the earth" are confederates against the Christ and shall be utterly destroyed. The nations of the earth are doomed, not only on account of their misrule, but also because they support this beastly institution with which they are represented as having "committed fornication and lived wantonly" (19:9). One evidence of that fact at present is the diplomatic relation between the Vatican and all civilized nations. For this reason it is revealed that in order to destroy the beast, all human governments must come to an end.

4. The binding of Satan (Rev. 20:1-3). The apostle, having seen the end of the apostate church and the political governments, is now permitted to see the arrest and incarceration of the spiritual power that has been incarnated in these institutions. Satan is bound by an angel with a great chain and cast into the abyss. To understand this paragraph, it is necessary to observe that it contains symbolic language. The key, the chain, the seal, the abyss cannot be literal mechanical instruments to be used on a spirit being. They must represent spiritual means.

The Greek word translated angel means messenger. In the Scriptures it is applied to both human and spirit messengers (Lk. 7:24; Heb. 1:13, 14). It is held by some that the angel in this case is the Lord Himself. "He is to return to the earth and overthrow Satan, all ungodly government and lawlessness." Without doubt the church of Christ is the messenger intended here, for she has been commissioned by her Lord to bear the good news to the ends of the earth; and she is at war with the devil (Eph. 6:10-17).

The chain signifies the word of God. This is in harmony with divine efforts against Satan recorded elsewhere. Thus our Lord spoke of Satan's defeat as a result of preaching by the seventy messengers (Lk. 10:17, 18). And in Rev. 12:10, 11, he is overcome by three means—

the blood of Christ, the testimony of the gospel, the suffering of the church.

Since Satan carries on his business on earth through human personalities, it is reasoned that every person converted by the gospel preached by the church lessens his activity that much. The final effect from an evangelized world will be as if he were bound by an iron chain and confined in a dungeon.

II. Characteristics of the Millennium

Millennium comes from two Latin words which means a thousand years. It is used to denote a period of universal righteousness, when the Church of Christ shall be triumphant over every foe, political and spiritual.

1. Christ's reign shall be universal (Rev. 20:4-6). The greatest speech in the Old Testament on this topic is found in Ps. 72:8-11. Here the thought is easily comprehended, but John's vision of our Lord's dominion calls for a careful investigation.

(1) The reign of the martyrs. John saw "thrones" and they were occupied by "the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus," for "they lived and reigned with Christ." In 6:9-11 these martyrs are seen "underneath the altar," crying for judgment on those who had slain them. They are told to "rest yet for a little time" until more have been killed. In 13:15 power is given the Beast to kill those who would not worship his image. In 17:6 Babylon, the papal church, is described as being "drunken with the blood of the saints." Since the same martyr class is spoken of in the twentieth chapter as reigning with Christ, it follows that the cause of Christ, which has previously suffered from the apostate church, shall in the millennium be triumphant with no enemy in the field. Moreover, since the martyr spirit shall characterize the people who shall live in this period, there will be absolute loyalty to Christ and His word.

(2) "The first resurrection." John's millennium

begins and ends with a figurative resurrection. It begins with the resurrection of the martyr spirit, called "the first resurrection." It ends with the resurrection of the satanic spirit, for "when the thousand years are finished, satan shall be loosed." This may be called the second resurrection in contrast with the first. Between these two resurrections the thousand years intervene during which time Satan shall not be permitted to influence this earth.

In order to establish the fact that we are here dealing with figurative resurrections, two generally accepted rules of interpretation must be noticed. According to sound Hermeneutics, the first rule is that the meaning of any passage is to be obtained from its context and to harmonize with it. Since the book of Revelation is symbolic and figurative, a figurative resurrection in chapter twenty is not only permissible but necessary. The second rule is like unto the first. The meaning of a passage must be in harmony with the Bible as a whole. According to this rule, the interpretation already suggested is supported by the manner the Bible speaks elsewhere. In Ezek. 37:1-14 the return of Israel from captivity in Babylon is presented by the figure of a resurrection. The prophet Elijah was figuratively raised in the person of John the Baptist (Mal. 4:5, 6; Lk. 1:17; Matt. 11:14). Those buried with Christ in baptism experience a spiritual resurrection to a new life (Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1). And Paul speaks of the evangelistic effect upon the Gentiles from the conversion of the Jews as "life from the dead" (Rom. 11:15).

The full import of the first resurrection can be found by exegetical investigation.

1. It shall be a resurrection of souls, not bodies. In speaking of the resurrection of the body, Paul says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body"

(1 Cor. 15:44). Nowhere in the Bible is the term soul applied to the resurrection body.

2. It shall be a resurrection "of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God." From this it is certain that of all the saints dead, only those who have been martyred for the cause of Christ shall be raised at the beginning of the Millennium. The righteous dead who have not suffered martyrdom are not in the picture. Since this resurrection is figurative, the passage means that the government of the world in that age will be in the hands of persons of spirit and character like the martyrs.

3. It shall be a resurrection life of a thousand years' duration. No doubt the definite number is here used for a very long period (cp. Ex. 20:6; Deut. 1:11). When the thousand years are ended, it is understood that the life and reign with Christ of these martyrs; i. e., of persons having the martyr spirit, are completed.

4. "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished." This second figurative resurrection is contemporaneous with the loosing of Satan, for "when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison." The resurrection of the satanic spirit will issue in moral and political corruption, the same conditions which prevailed before the Millennium. This order of thing shall not continue very long, for Satan shall be loosed but "for a little time," and then suffer final defeat (7-10).

2. War shall cease. Isa. 2:3, 4. The means by which this shall be accomplished is "the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." In harmony with this, Christ commissioned His apostles to begin the publication of the gospel in that city, and there they began (Lk. 24:46, 47; Acts 2).

The effect is a new social order. The God of Jacob "will judge between the nations." Here is the original "World Court." Instruction in and practice of war shall end. This will be a natural consequence of victory over Satan and sin, for "sin is lawlessness, is of the devil"

(1 Jno. 3:4, 8), and "war is hell." Therefore, so long as the world is unevangelized and Satan is loose, nations will prepare for and engage in war. But be it known to the ends of the earth that, "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jno. 3:8). The harmonious reign of "the Prince of Peace" is vividly portrayed by allegorical language in Isa. 11:6-9. Human depravity, characterized by wild beasts and poisonous serpents, shall be changed from rapine and cruelty to friendliness and good deeds. Men "shall not hurt nor destroy, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea."

3. Oppression of the poor shall end (Ps. 72:4, 12-14; Isa. 65:21-23). To the Jews this message of hope would mean that the curse of Jehovah upon them because of their disobedience (Deut. 28:30), shall be lifted by the Messiah. In the gospel age its application is to all who shall live during the universal reign of Christ. He is the friend of the poor and downtrodden of earth. Because He shall break the power of the oppressor, the needy shall enjoy the comforts of life. No longer shall the brutal rich and the tyrannical rulers over men dwell in houses built by the helpless poor; nor shall they eat, without value received, the produce wrung from the hands of the toilers.

This enjoyment of life will be the result of the gospel in human life. By social legislation the greed and avarice of men can be restrained, but never cured. Such legislation deals only with the symptoms, the cause remains untouched. The simple, yet profound, philosophy of Christ on this subject is by the majority of sociologists either unknown, or else ignored. He locates the cause in the human heart (Matt. 15:18-20). His reasoning is: Make the heart right and the life will be right; begin on the inside, not on the outside.

4. Death shall relax its grip (Isa. 65:20, 22). Then

shall be restored the longevity of the first age of man when Adam lived 930 years and Methuselah 969. "As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people." An oak lives a thousand years. In the gospel is the elixir of life. It calls upon men to "live soberly, righteously and godly" (Tit. 2:12). The extension of life by right living is confirmed by modern science. We are told that human life during the last fifty years has been lengthened more than twenty-five years, because people have learned how to live more sanely.

5. The spirit of happiness and praise of Jehovah shall prevail (Isa. 12:1-6). In the eleventh chapter the advent of the Messiah and the restoration of Israel constitute the antecedents of this song of praise. In the song itself the reasons for rejoicing are: God's anger is turned away, His salvation is enjoyed and His doings are recognized. These results are Messianic, hence applicable to both Jews and Gentiles. Christ reconciles man to God, gives joy because of sins forgiven, and men acclaim Him as King. One characteristic of the gospel is its spirit of "joy unspeakable and full of glory." This is distinctly traceable in the life of the early church (Acts 2:46, 47; 5: 41; 8:8; 39:12, 25; Phil. 4:4, etc.). In the Millennium when this anthem of praise shall be sung the world over, there will be no room for criticism, fault-finding and discontent. Happiness, God's original purpose concerning man, shall once more mark human history.

6. The church shall be apostolic in doctrine, unity and life (Eph. 5:27). It shall appear "glorious," without "spot or wrinkle, and without blemish." Now she is spotted by divisions; then these denominational warts shall disfigure her no more. Now she is spotted by the world; then Christian living shall be more perfect, for Satan shall be bound. Now she is wrinkled and old because of the load she has been carrying through the centuries—divisions, quarrels, bickerings, human creeds,

unscriptural names, sins of every stripe and hue; then she shall renew her youth and become "a glorious church." Her features will be exceeding fair and in dress she will appear "as a bride adorned for her husband."

Anyone familiar with denominational religion and New Testament Christianity must be convinced that a divided church, with its corrupted teaching and spirit of strife, cannot bring in the glorious age to come. One purpose of the Millennium is to exhibit an evangelized and believing world, and thus vindicate the church of Christ as a divine institution and the gospel as the power of God unto salvation. But that, according to Jesus' prayer (Jno. 17:19-23) cannot be accomplished by a divided church. Some one has said, "A man may save his soul in a denomination, but he cannot save the world." It appears conclusive, therefore, that the millennial church will be, not a church of sects, but the church of Christ, whose pattern is found in the New Testament.

Conclusion

From this study some truths are deducible relative to the purpose of the Millennium.

1. It will be a divine demonstration against all evil. What an argument this reign of righteousness is for the power of the Son of God over Satan and sin! Then people shall not be half slave and half free, for the slave owner shall not be in business. Man's inalienable rights—Life, Liberty, and Happiness—shall then be enjoyed to the full. Then the dominion of the whole earth originally given to God's people (Gen. 1:28-30), but lost through sin, shall be revested in them (Heb. 2:8, 9). Then shall be fulfilled the promise of Jesus, "the meek shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5), for "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:4). In that day when "Jehovah shall be King over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9), the eyes of the universe shall be

focused on Christ as the maker of spiritual history and the controller of human actions with reference to his own purpose.

2. It will be a complete vindication of the gospel of Christ and His Church. This is not the faith of some modern prophets. One writes, "From the time that the first Adam surrendered the kingdom to Satan, the effort to re-establish it with man has been a continual failure. And it will be a failure in this sin-cursed earth until the Second Adam, who has overcome Satan, shall return to purify the earth and establish the kingdom on resurrection ground."—(Jesus is Coming, p. 46, by W. E. B.). Another contends that "the church is not destined to convert this world before Jesus comes" (T. J. McCrossan, *The Bible; Its Christ and Modernish*, p. 151). Yet another declares, "we are absolutely at the end of our resources (C. I. Scofield, *What do the Prophets Say*, p. 160). All of this class of writers hold that men's only hope for realizing the millennium is the personal coming of Christ, who shall then conquer Satan and sin by His personal presence. From such pessimistic teaching certain mental reactions are inevitable. Does it generate a passion for evangelism and a burning zeal to invite people into the church? On the other hand, what hearer would want to invest his time, talent, money, life in a losing cause? Does this unscriptural doctrine offer a reason for the present meager evangelistic results? If the gospel and the church shall in the end prove a failure, what reason is there in the Great Commission? Is such teaching an inducement to young men to enter the gospel ministry?

Over against these human opinions of doubt we have the divine word of faith. The Spirit of God through Daniel symbolized the Kingdom of Christ by a stone which "became a great mountain and filled the whole earth," because it should "break in pieces and consume" all other kingdoms (2:35, 44). Here is conquest by king-

dom, not by Christ in person. To this end Jesus spoke the parable of the leaven (Matt. 13:33). His Kingdom, the church, is to operate in the world field "till it is all leavened." But some one says, "Leaven is error, evil, corruption," therefore the church and the gospel shall fail. But it is unthinkable that He who is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24), should die for and found an institution whose end should be a total wreck. What he intended by the parable was not to speak of the quality of the Kingdom, but of its spreading power. Moreover, He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14). What reason can be assigned for Jesus placing His church in the world, if as salt she should lose her saltiness, and as a lamp her light would go out? We are forced to conclude with Paul that the church with the gospel is a conquering force, "mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4, 5).

CHAPTER XV

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Christ "shall appear a second time" (Heb. 9:27, 28). The analogy used by the apostle appears thus: "As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment;" so Christ has been appointed "to bear the sins of many" through death at His first coming, and to sit as judge at His second coming. Not only is His coming unto judgment of the ungodly, but it is also "unto salvation" of His people. The unfinished part of man's salvation is "the redemption of our body" from the grave (Rom. 8:23). When that is accomplished by the resurrection, then Christ's last enemy, which is death, will be vanquished (1 Cor. 15:25, 26). From this it appears that the coming of the Lord will mark the end of salvation and the execution of the final judgment. The divine purpose in His second advent seems to be "to sum up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10), and to bring the gospel age to a close.

I. The Certainty of His Coming

1. In type. The Jewish Tabernacle was "a copy and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5). The divine purpose in it was to summarize Christianity in type and to exhibit a typical heaven on earth. Once a year on the day of Atonement, the High Priest, a type of Christ, entered with blood and incense the Holy of Holies, a type of Heaven. When he had sprinkled the blood and offered the incense, he returned to the waiting congregation and with outspread hands blessed the people through the benediction recorded in Num. 6:24-26. In Hebrews the ninth chapter Paul by way of contrast speaks of Christ, our High Priest, as having entered heaven with His atoning blood where He now appears "before the face of God for us." And when His mediatorial reign comes to a close, He shall return to the

earth and bless "them that wait for Him" by raising them from the dead and receiving them unto Himself. Thus, by means of type, "the blessed hope" of the Lord's coming again has been pictured to His people for their meditation upon, and delight in, this coming day of grace.

2. In teaching. The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew contain the great original upon this absorbing theme. The occasion of this prophetic discourse was his prediction of the destruction of the temple. This led His disciples to inquire concerning two subjects: the ruin of the temple and the second coming of Christ. Relative to these they wished to know two things: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of their coming?" In His answer to these questions Jesus did not set the time for either event, but He did name the signs connected with each.

The following analysis will enable the reader to distinguish the signs of the two events.

(1) The signs preceding the destruction of the temple (4-28).

- (a) The coming of false Christs 4, 5.
- (b) Wars and rumors of wars 6, 7.
- (c) Famines, pestilences and earthquakes 7, 8.
- (d) Persecution of the disciples 9-13.
- (e) Success of the gospel 14.
- (f) The signal for flight from the city 15-28.

As these signs came to pass one by one, the Christians were enabled to know when to expect the fall of the city and when to escape with their lives from its divine judgment.

(2) The signs connected with Christ's second coming (29-31). Jesus predicted His coming and then spoke seven parables for the purpose of teaching men to be ready for the event. As the fig-tree by putting forth its leaves tells us summer is near, so the darkening and convulsing heavenly bodies will be a sign of the imme-

diate presence of the Son of Man (32-35). His coming will be unexpected and sudden, just as was the flood to the antediluvians (36-39). When he returns there will be a separation of the wicked from the righteous, illustrated by the men in the field and the women at the mill (40, 41). The double figure of the householder and the servant enjoins watchful and faithful waiting (42-51). The ten virgins teach the necessity of adequate preparation to meet Him (25:1-13), while the parable of the talents is related to that of the virgins by illustrating how to prepare to meet Him (25:14-30).

3. In promise. In His last discourse before the crucifixion Jesus informed His apostles of His departure, but said to them, "I come again" (Jno. 14:1-3). At the time of His ascension two heavenly visitors said to the astonished disciples, "this Jesus who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). From that time His followers could say, "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven" (1 Thes. 4:16). As members of the spiritual kingdom they affirmed, "our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). Without misgivings, John, the apostle, wrote, "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). In these passages the certainty of His coming is made sure in language plain and positive. He who left this promise said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." It but remains for us to believe Him, and thus enter into the joyful anticipation of His manifestation when "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is" (1 Jno. 3:2).

II. The Time of His Coming

1. It is not revealed. Matthew reports Jesus as saying, "Of that day and hour knoweth no one. Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (24:36, 42). Mark's testimony is to the same effect: "Ye know not when the time is" (13:33). From this is

seen the human folly of setting a definite time for the event. Some students of the prophecies have become so inflated by their own chronological theories as to boldly announce the year, month and day when the Lord will come. Wm. Miller, founder of Seventh-Day Adventism, fixed on 1843, but that year became history without the appearing of the Lord. Ellen White, a later prophetess of this denomination, endorsed Mr. Miller's date and explained its miscarriage by saying the Lord's "hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures" (Early Writing, p. 64). Pastor Russell designated first 1874, next 1878 and lastly 1914. He died in 1916, but Christ had not yet come. The International Bible Students Association, endorser of Mr. Russell, set first 1918 as the date of the Lord's coming, and when that failed moved the date up to 1925, which also proved a failure. The rebound from this date-setting is stark unbelief. When these dates passed unfulfilled, many in the churches holding this doctrine let go of the Christian faith altogether. The same fanciful speculations have kept a great number outside the church from giving the gospel of Christ its due consideration. Thus disgrace has been brought upon the very name of religion and the advance of Christ's conquering kingdom has been greatly retarded.

2. It will not be previously announced. The teaching of Christ on this point is emphatic. As the people in the days of Noah "knew not until the flood came," so the Lord's coming will be suddenly and unannounced (Matt. 24:39). For this reason He has warned His disciples against surfeiting, drunkenness and cares of this life lest "that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come" (Lk. 21:34, 35). He speaks of himself as having gone to another country (heaven), having left His house (the church) and assigned to each of His servants His work. He then urges faithfulness and vigilance in house-keeping during His absence, "lest coming

suddenly He find you sleeping" (Mk. 13:34-36). Concurring with this Peter says, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief" (2 Pet. 3:10).

Adverse to the above teaching is the theory of the Lord's immediate coming. "Pre-millennialists believe that He may come any moment" (W. E. B. p.65). They point out a number of present day "signs" which, they claim, indicate that his coming is imminent. This theory is not only equivalent to date-setting and advertising before hand the event, but it is also subversive of the Scriptures. If the Lord may come soon or any day now, there can be no triumph of the gospel and the church. Then it would seem that the Savior has failed and Satan has won. That Jesus can by miracle put Satan out of business in a moment, every Christian believes, but it would not bring glory to him nor his cause. Other difficulties there are which militate against the theory of Christ's immediate coming. Satan has not yet been bound. The Gentile world has not yet been evangelized. The Jews are still unconverted. A divided church is yet in the field. Plowshares and spears have not yet been beaten into pruning-hooks. All these things must come to pass before Christ comes, for his arrival marks "the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3). In Paul's day there were some who taught the immediate coming of the Lord, but he warned the church not to be "quickly shaken, nor yet troubled", for some predictions must first be fulfilled (2 Thes. 2:1-12). That warning is still in order.

3. It will be when all the prophecies have been fulfilled. Acts 3:19-21. Peter, in urging the moral reformation of his hearers, gives as one reason that God "may send the Christ." In one of his letters he presents the same thought in reasoning with Christians to live right, "looking for and earnestly desiring the coming day of God", (2 Pet. 3:11, 12). Not only is his coming dependent upon the moral reform of the world, but it also appears that he will come when people want him, for they are

spoken of as "earnestly desiring" it. From this revelation it is conclusive that the gospel is to prepare men for Christ's coming. Of this fact let those take notice who teach that he is to come first and then by his personal presence convert the world. A representative writer of that class says, "It is Christ's coming that is to make the millennium, not the millennium which is to prepare the world for Christ" (Joseph A. Seiss, *The Last Times*, p. 40). Such teaching is plainly in opposition to the statement by the inspired apostle.

The time of Christ's coming is set in verse 21 Him "the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things" spoken by the Old Testament prophets. The noun rendered "restoration" comes from a verb which means to restore a thing to its former state. In this case it means recovery from the effects of sin. This restoration is spoken of as a fit preparation for the coming of Christ. The word also means consummation, completion. The idea is that all the events spoken of by the prophets are to be consummated before the Lord will come. These predictions have been placed before the reader in the previous portion of this study. Let him recall particularly the conversion of the Jews and the Millennium. It is common with theorists to teach that Jesus will come in order to fulfill the prophecies. In this they differ from Peter who affirms that the Lord will not come until all the prophecies have been fulfilled. This statement is the nearest approach to setting the time of the Lord's return found anywhere in the Scriptures.

III. The Manner of His Coming.

Luke tells us that his coming again will be "in like manner" to his departure (Acts 1:11). As he left his disciples, "he lifted up his hands and blessed them" (Lk. 24: 50, 51); when he comes again, he will bless his people by receiving them unto himself (Jno. 14:3). When he ascended, "a cloud received him out of their

sight" (Acts. 1:9); his coming again shall be "with the clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). His departure was accompanied by angels (Acts 1: 10); his return shall be with "all the angels with him" (Matt. 25:31). He went away having founded hope in death by his own resurrection (I Cor. 15:20-22); he "shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" to wake the dead from their sleep (1 Thes. 4:16). In a word, he shall come "in his own glory, and the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels" (Lk. 9:26). Paul speaks of it as the "appearing of the glory of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13). As Savior he shall "be glorified in his saints" (2 Thes. 1:10). As Judge he shall be glorified in his truth, "rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thes. 1:8). Then, if not before, shall be executed God's purpose in him: "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10, 11).

IV. The Events At His Coming.

1. The resurrection of all men. First, the Scriptures reveal the order in the resurrection. Paul in speaking on this point says, "each in his own order," and he begins with "Christ as the first-fruits" of immortality (I Cor. 15:23). Next he adds, "then they that are Christ's" to which fact he again refers when he says "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (I Thes. 4:16). Simultaneous with the raising of all the dead saints the living saints will be changed from mortality to immortality. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (I Cor. 15:51). "We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep" (I Thes. 4:15). The last class to be raised will

be the wicked, for "there shall be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

In the next place, the time of the resurrection is revealed. Jesus says that all men, good and bad, shall be raised in the same "hour" or at the same time. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (Jno. 5:28, 29). Paul says this event shall take place "at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised" (1 Cor. 15:52).

He also definitely marks the resurrection event by Christ's return, for he says it shall take place "at His coming" (1 Cor. 15:23). This fact is further established by our Lord's promise to all who should believe on Him that such He would "raise up at the last day." See Jno. 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24. From this testimony it must be clear to all careful readers that the resurrection of all men shall take place when Jesus comes again at the last day of time preceding eternity.

In opposition to this, Pre-millennialists teach that there shall be a two-fold resurrection. They explain "the first resurrection" in Rev. 20:5 to be a literal one of all the saints, and that the ungodly are raised at the close of the thousand years. To make their theory true, the Scriptures should speak of two hours and two voices and two trumpets a thousand years apart. They should also speak of resurrections, and not of a resurrection; of harvests, and not of a harvest (Matt. 13:36-43).

2) The final judgement. When John's "seventh angel sounded," the four and twenty elders before the throne of God said, "Thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged" (Rev. 11:18). John himself "saw a great white throne," and "the dead standing before the throne; and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were

judged out of the things which are written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. 20:11, 12). The time for the dead to be judged has been set in connection with Christ's coming. Jesus said: "But when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations. Then shall He render to every man according to His deeds, whether it be good or bad" (Matt. 25:31, 32; 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

These passages are fatal to the pre-millennial theory of the judgment. That doctrine boldly denies that "all the nations" and "every man" shall stand before the Judge at the same time. It does not teach that God "hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31) through Jesus Christ at His coming. It teaches that the whole period of the Millennium shall be the judgment day. "It is this thousand years, then, and especially the adjudications by which they are to be introduced and concluded, which constitute the day of judgment" (Joseph A. Seiss, *The Last Times*, p. 144). It also teaches that during this period no less than four separate judgments are to take place (See *Jesus is Coming*, by W. E. B., pp. 101-106). It is astonishing to what length good people will go in making void the word of God in order to support a theory.

3. Christ delivers His kingdom to God (1 Cor. 15:24-28). The point of time when this act shall take place is clearly established by the word of God. In speaking of Christ's raising the dead "at His coming," Paul proceeds to say: "Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father." He also points out that the surrender of the kingdom is a logical sequence of the resurrection, for by it will be destroyed the last enemy of Christ and His people which is death. That victory completes the redemptive work of Christ and the purpose of His mediatorial kingdom. Then all things shall have been "put in subjugation under his

feet. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all."

The confusing opinions of the Pre-millennialists are against this plain teaching of the Word. They contend that Christ has not yet set up His kingdom, but will do so when He comes again. Yet Paul says God has "put all things in subjection under His feet." What more remains for His dominion? Instead of Christ returning to set up His kingdom, Paul tells us that He shall deliver up His kingdom "at His coming." Before He went away Jesus illustrated by a parable the fact of His present reign. "He said therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Lk. 19:12). That the "nobleman" represents Christ and the "far country" heaven, it is presumed nobody will deny. From this it is certain that Christ went away to rule as King, not to return to set up His kingdom.

4. A new heaven and earth. The Bible teaches that the present constitution of the material universe shall be dissolved by fire and a new universe created. "Of old didst Thou lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture Thou shalt change them" (Ps. 102:25, 26). In 2 Pet. 3:8-13 the apostle discusses this subject and dates the event in connection with the Lord's coming. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." He indicates the time further by saying that this dissolution shall take place "in the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men," and then exhorts the Christians to earnestly desire "the coming day of God."

The creation that shall succeed the old is described as "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Accordingly, John "saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more" (Rev. 21:1). He also saw the "new Jerusalem," defined as "the wife of the Lamb" (9), the church, coming down from heaven to the new earth, the saints' eternal home.

Conclusion

1. Relation of final events to the divine purpose. The whole trend of the Scriptures is to show that man and his dwelling place, the earth, shall be redeemed from sin and its effect. God is finally to be glorified through Christ, His gospel and His church. This final and full glorification shall be effected by the events at Christ's coming. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin" (Rom. 5:12); by the resurrection, "death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54). "Sin is lawlessness" and "unrighteousness" (1 Jno. 3:4; 5:17); but God "hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts. 17:31), and then truth and righteousness shall be vindicated. The kingdom of darkness is now at war with the kingdom of Christ (Jno. 15:19); when Christ delivers up His kingdom to God, the victory over the world shall have been won by faith (1 Jno. 5:4). At present "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain" (Rom. 8:21) on account of sin; in the new creation it "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (21). "And there shall be no curse any more; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, anymore. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat. God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and they shall see His face."

2. The second coming of Christ and the Millennium. The question is not, shall Christ come? but when? Shall

it be before or after the Millennium? This question can be summarily answered by the events connected with His coming. From those events the pre-millennial coming appears impossible:

(1) There will be no time for a millennium. It has been established by the clear and unequivocal word of God that Christ shall come and raise the dead "at the last day" of time. It is unthinkable, as it is impossible, that there shall be a thousand years after the last day.

(2) There will be no place for a millennium. It has been pointed out by the Scriptures that the Millennium shall be on this present earth. But they also declare that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Since the present constitution of nature shall pass away when the Lord comes, it follows that if He personally appears before the Millennium there can be no thousand years of bliss on this earth.

(3) There will be no need for a millennium. It has been shown from the word of truth that the millennium is to be a triumphant demonstration of the gospel and the church over Satan and sin. But when Christ comes the dead will be raised and the judgment will convene. Then will be meted out eternal rewards for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked. That ends the gospel age. From this it appears that the millennial victory must be won before Jesus comes, or it will not be won at all.

Finale

The eternal purpose, as revealed in prophecy and seen to move forward in history, is now before us. The end in view, as announced through the seer, contains some striking facts. First, there is the salvation of man from the power, practice and effect of sin. Second, the whole earth is to acknowledge Jehovah. Third, these universal effects are to be secured by the Messiah.

The agencies employed to this end are natural and su-

pernatural. Human beings, godly and ungodly, have appeared as actors in this engrossing drama. The earth itself, by productivity and want of it, has been made to sympathize. The spirit world about man—involving God, the Spirit of God, the Word of God, and angels good and bad—has been laid under tribute. The final moving factors, providentially conceived and supervised, are the cross of Christ, the gospel of Christ and the church of Christ.

Gradually the miracle of consummation has been unfolding. Patiently Jehovah has waited on men, in order to give them time to learn through experience. The Jews must demonstrate that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3:20). The Gentile world must prove to its own satisfaction that it "through its wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. 1:21). Monuments of sin and judgment are set up along the highway of the past, so that people then and in the future may learn that "the way of transgressor is hard" (Prov. 13:15). "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son to redeem" (Gal. 4:4), and the whole world was ready for Him. Since then the divine purpose has been moving forward against great difficulties toward the crowning day, when heaven and earth will unite in the glad acclaim: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased."

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